

NEW STATESMAN

James Fenton at the Liberal Party Assembly

Willy Brandt, Bruno Kreisky, Olof Palme:

A European Correspondence

Peter Wilby: A Squalid London School

Mervyn Jones: The Two Maos

Edward Mendelson on Editing Auden

Bruce Page on Moshe Dayan

Paul Bailey: Elizabeth Taylor's Last Novel

Breaking the Banks

Ambassador College

NOV 3 1976

There are occasions when the response provoked by a left-wing proposal is more significant, more telling in every sense, than the mere proposal itself. The past week has provided a classic example of this syndrome – in the consternation provoked by the suggestion (made by the Labour Party National Executive Committee) that the clearing banks and leading insurance companies should be nationalised. It is, after all, merely a proposal: it may be passed by the party conference, but has only the smallest chance of ever being carried through by the Government (only last May Mr Harold Lever publicly repudiated any such possibility). But the reaction has still been an angry one and has come not only from the quarters that might have been expected, such as the City and the banks themselves, but – in perhaps its most hysterical form – from New Printing House Square.

The Times, in a 4,000-word editorial entitled 'Not only another folly, but also the death of freedom', even outdid the Shadow Chancellor, Sir Geoffrey Howe, who had confined himself to the fairly mild comment – by comparison – that the proposals were 'a blueprint for bankruptcy'. But the form its reaction took was typical. The proposals, we were told, combine the undergraduate's 'plausibility' with his 'lack of a sense of proportion', and so forth. But this laughable superficiality did not prevent the plan from being so dangerous as to threaten our entire democratic way of life, leading inevitably to the corporate state, either fascist or communist. That is to say, the criticism is two-fold and self-contradictory: one, the proposals are unworkable; two, if we are not eternally vigilant, they will somehow be put into effect and our cherished freedoms destroyed overnight.

It is perfectly true that the document is unwieldy, jargon-ridden and in some cases badly informed. It is quite fair to comment that public ownership of banks in France and Japan has come about under very different conditions from the one in which this country finds itself. It may well be true that nationalising the banks at this stage would cause a loss of foreign confidence and a flight from sterling. But this can only be a matter of inspired guesswork; and it is

far from being the only, let alone the most important, reason for the violent opposition to the plan. It is not, after all, unexpected. The desirability of some sort of government control of the banks, so as to direct them towards industrial investment, has been received doctrine among left-wing economists for years. It is disingenuous, to say the least, for bankers, businessmen and indeed financial journalists to reel back with such apparent shock: it would have been more surprising, given the composition of the NEC, if it had *not* come out in favour of nationalisation.

But what the apparent shock conceals is a genuine, deep-seated sense of outrage. The banks have long been used to acting in secret and fiercely resent any invasion of their privacy: up till five years ago they were not even required to make their profit figures public. They have consistently avoided working in partnership with the government of the day, whatever its colour. It was a Conservative government which, in 1972, asked the Big Four not to lend so much to property companies: the banks responded by increasing their loans to such companies by 75 per cent, while raising the level of their investment in manufacturing industry by less than 20 per cent. And, far from being genuinely concerned about their smaller customers, the clearing banks' attitude (as the history of fringe banks shows) is often callous and cavalier.

So in many ways the hysteria of the past week is to be welcomed, in that it has put the banks (and the insurance companies) so much on the defensive. The 'freedom' which has been so piously invoked now proves to be a far cry from the freedom of the little man to put money by for his old age, endangered by wicked left-wingers who want to throw his savings away in support of bankrupt industries. It is, on the contrary, the freedom of the strong and powerful to invest with reckless disregard for the country's interest – and by extension, for those of the small man. For all its faults, the Transport House document has carried the fight into the enemy's camp: and provides a salutary reminder of where the battle lines in our society are drawn.

Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Steel's First Stand

The strength and weaknesses of David Steel are beginning to show up. Here are the strengths. Mr Steel has absolutely no rival in his party. He knows it. He has known it most probably for a long time. When the leadership contest was in full swing, and John Pardoe was behaving like a whirling dervish, or a man who had just put his head into a bee-hive, Steel knew perfectly well that he had just to wait, not to fuss, and everything would be his. He didn't (and doesn't) say so, but he always had the manner of the Heir Apparent. His quiet summer – well, for God's sake, wasn't it about time that we heard a little less of the Liberals? Steel is also right to be thinking in terms of forming a coalition, and of exploiting to the full these useful parliamentary votes. There are bound to be plenty of opportunities for horse-trading in the near future. Steel comes to the leadership at the right time, and he has as clear a mandate from his party as he could wish.

Now for the weaknesses. Steel is in the wrong party. It's difficult to know just which party he should be in, but he is completely out of sympathy with the particular brands of frivolity represented by the Liberals. On the other hand, he has to live with them – he has no other home. On the eve of this Llandudno Assembly, Cyril Smith made a speech about what the Liberals needed by way of leadership. It was a rotten speech. Cyril Smith is a fool who affects to believe that one-and-a-half million are unemployed because life is too cushy when you're on the dole. His speech was designed as an insult and challenge to Steel. He said: 'If David will give [the party] and the people the leadership which it needs and the people desire, he will have my support. I hope that we will not have namby-pamby, puerile rubbish, but tough, honest, firm, straight-forward leadership.' The implication was clear: Smith thought Steel too soft. And yet, between the time that Smith issued the advance copies of his speech and actually delivered the thing, he was offered a new job – that of running Steel's publicity campaign.

Why? Because, if you exclude Grimond and Thorpe, Cyril Smith is the most famous Liberal around. Steel knows this. He has no respect for Smith's views, but every respect for his fame. And this, curiously, is typical of Steel's dangerous alienation from his party. He confessed, for instance, that he did not like the proposed method of election which was eventually adopted, and by which he was made leader. He is privately against large multi-member constituencies, but that is what Liberal policy wants. All over Llandudno at the moment there are weird individuals arguing that, when Scotland and Wales and Northern Ireland are hived off, England should be chopped to

pieces as well. The idea is that we should return to the dark ages, and revive the ancient Cornish nation. Steel himself has no interest at all in English devolution, but Richard Wainwright has, and it is official policy that the parliamentary party should press Labour to make its plans for England public before the Second Reading of the Devolution Bill. Steel has to work with and lead the English devolutionists, just as he has to lead the recalcitrant Smith. And Grimond and Pardoe and Thorpe. Of these three, only Thorpe has seen fit to keep his mouth shut and let Steel get on with the job.

Pardoe, as always, has tried hard to behave. His *Guardian* article was a touching declaration of loyalty. True, it had some touches of pardomania: 'I know no Liberal, in or out of Parliament, who deserves to be proud of his or her actions during the leadership crisis.' Pardomania, I ought to explain, is the inability to distinguish between what is happening in your own head and what is going on in the world outside. Because Pardoe has no reason to be proud of his own actions, he imagines that nobody else has either. 'It was a bad time,' he goes on, 'and all of us did badly.' All of us, that is, except David Steel, who did rather well, earning himself a place in the history books alongside such names as, for instance, Clement Davies.

On Tuesday Pardoe said that if direct elections to the European Assembly were conducted on the first-past-the-post system, it would be as bad as anything that had happened in the Soviet Union in the last 20 years. Pardomania again. What Pardoe means is that he would be as angry about it as he has been about anything that has happened recently in Russia. This lack of any sense of proportion is typical of the Liberals.

On the same issue that morning, Steve Attack had announced that his patience was exhausted. Attack, and the Young Liberals of whom he is chairman, are against

Steel at the moment. Well, they would be, wouldn't they? Having earlier this year abolished the state in Great Yarmouth, they are hardly likely to go for Christian virtue in Llandudno. On Monday I asked Attack why he was being so nasty about David Steel. 'David who?' he replied. He went on to say that if Steel dared to mention coalition in his Saturday speech, he would be shouted down by the Young Liberals. He was looking forward to it. He said it would be the first time that such a thing had happened during the leader's speech. He also said that there were going to be some very interesting suspensions of standing orders this year. How very interesting.

The wisdom of a coalition policy was also called into question by Jo Grimond in the *Daily Mail*. Grimond is a master of the 'damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer and without sneering teach the rest to sneer' technique. He was a little worried that Steel had lain low for too long. He doubted the wisdom of speaking at the end, rather than the beginning, of the conference (although he did not mention that he himself regularly spoke at the end). And then, lo and behold, he was worried about coalition. If it meant cooperation between the parties in Parliament to prevent 'partisan and damaging legislation', well and good. But if it meant actual coalition, that was not so good. Quite why Grimond should have taken against coalition so suddenly, having always been in favour of it before, and having spoken in favour of it as recently as February 1974, it is difficult to know. My own view is that Grimond simply cannot resist putting a spoke in the wheel. He did so with Thorpe, who was his chosen successor. And he will do so with Steel at the first opportunity.

In fact, although Steel is in favour of entering an election campaign on a coalition ticket, and does not think it necessary to specify in advance with which party he would be prepared to coalesce, he has made it clear that his Saturday speech will not deal more than passingly with the subject. He intends to devote his time to outlining the sort of attitudes that should define Liberalism for the future, and will also be entertaining the audience with extracts from his correspondence with Jim Callaghan on the subject of the proposed Speaker's Conference on electoral law.

Nevertheless, when Emlyn Hooson referred to coalition in his opening address it was clear from the reaction of the audience that the majority of the delegates were in favour of it. If the present mood of the Assembly continues, Steel will emerge with his authority greatly increased. And then he will be able to set about instituting the changes which he wants. The eccentricities of the party, the dottiness, the divisions, the public agonies of Pardoe, the rantings of Smith, the wild antics of the Young Liberals will fade away. The Liberal Party is heading for a period of boring slog. After the brilliant era of Thorpe, the heyday of the dogs' meat men, fat men and the cranky millionaires, will come the age of virtue and the rule of the manse. A sabbatarian sobriety will descend on the Liberals. The stuntmen will pack their bags and go home. God will look down on the Liberals, and he will find them good.

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Donald Woods

Change or Pretence in Pretoria ?

The past fortnight in South Africa has been crammed with signs and portents. Prime Minister Vorster has been threatening so many opponents, and generally acting so tough, that it is almost certain he will relax the apartheid policy to some extent. That is how things are done in the ruling National Party. When they are about to ditch some aspect of policy, they sweeten the pill for their supporters with diehard rhetoric.

On 13 September, the tenth anniversary of his premiership, Mr Vorster told cheering supporters at the Transvaal congress of his party in a near-shout that there would be no changes in the apartheid policy – for all it may now be called 'plural democracy'. Political observers here began immediately to speculate on what changes are in store.

All the signs indicating some degree of change were there. Having won the Marico by-election handily against the extreme right-wing Herstigte Nasionale Party (which regards Vorster's National Party as too liberal) Vorster's men scheduled a series of provincial congresses at which backing would be sought for reforms in race policy. All were

carefully scripted, and followed a hallowed formula – one or two cabinet ministers would play the heavies with speeches of *kragdadigheid* (diehard toughness) while others would let drop odd remarks to prepare the faithful, so that the policy changes to come wouldn't come too unexpectedly. Thus at the Natal congress of the party in Durban, Justice Minister J. T. Kruger played the heavy while Education Minister Koornhof spoke of the need for 'spectacular' change if whites were to survive in South Africa. At the Free State congress in Bloemfontein the anaesthetic was applied a stage further. While Vorster gave a highly conservative public speech for national consumption, delegates were given a top-secret briefing behind closed doors, from which even their wives were barred, on certain policy changes.

Then came the Transvaal congress at which the process was continued yet a stage further, except that here Vorster's public speech was uttered in the most aggressive tones to the effect that no changes in 'basic policy' were envisaged. Almost lost in the body of the speech was a paragraph that

some change was contemplated in the 'implementation' of 'basic policy'. Also, for the first time in 16 years a general caucus of Nationalist MPs, Senators and provincial councillors was summoned for a highly secret briefing by Vorster.

Those, then, were the signs that change was under way. But what sort of change? That was the next question to be asked by South Africans not represented in the all-Caucasian caucus of the National Party. They could only speculate, because having gone up the mountain to seek inspiration from his own tribal elders, Mr Vorster had not by the week's end yet descended to the people to hand them the new tablets. But rumours flew thick and fast, among them the suggestion that all apartheid in sport is to be scrapped, that sports matters will be left to the sports administrators to determine, that theatres, libraries and other urban amenities may be integrated by action of the municipalities concerned, and that some sort of consultative machinery might be established with urban blacks who reject the 'homelands' formula of autonomous tribal territories.

The only certain thing about the new revelations is that when they come they will be insufficient to please black South Africans. What they want is the common vote, and that – Mr Vorster has made plain – is simply not negotiable. He states emphatically that whatever else his party changes (presumably in the realm of social, cultural and sports integration) they will



under no circumstances consider integration of the franchise.

While all this white politicking and white speculation was going on black violence was continuing, with Cape Town as the new flashpoint. Unlike the Soweto rioters, who started the wave of unrest three months ago but confined themselves to the black townships, the Cape Town rioters staged their demonstrations in the heart of the city, and for day after day tear gas hovered over Adderley Street as police battled to clear the city centre. As in Soweto, schools were burned, cars stoned and police attacked, and by mid-September the death toll had reached 300. One government response was to launch the biggest detention swoop by security police in South Africa's history, and 800 are now believed to have been detained without trial. Anti-government newspapers have headlined the detentions and possibly triggered off the recent statement by Justice Minister Kruger that he will introduce new legislation to ban the publication of names of persons detained. In the light of such pronouncements, it is hard to see whom the Government expects to satisfy with its minimal concessions, and many South Africans of all races fear that the present violence will soon escalate to a new pitch.

Mr Vorster has warned that unless the violence ceases 'new methods' will be adopted by the Government to counter it. This suggests an escalation on both sides, possibly to an all-out racial war with superior weaponry on the one hand and superior numbers on the other. This could have been one of the things Mr Vorster was dreading when he said the alternative to détente in Southern Africa was 'too ghastly to contemplate'. And that, possibly, is about the only statement made by Mr Vorster this year with which all South Africans would be prepared to agree.

Meanwhile, Dr Kissinger is flying in to see if some sort of new dispensation is possible in Southern Africa. Vorster-watchers feel the Premier is conditioning his supporters to accept some sort of deal with the American Secretary of State. They base their view on the number of times Mr Vorster has emphasised to his party congresses that the United States, like South Africa, is 'strongly anti-communist'. For to be described by Mr Vorster as 'anti-communist' is to receive the ultimate accolade of political acceptability, and it remains to be seen what use Dr Kissinger can make of this preliminary seal of approval.

The questions of Zimbabwe (né Rhodesia) and Namibia (né South West Africa) are known to be on the agenda, but most South Africans would consider it inconceivable that South Africa's internal race policy should not also be on that agenda. The next question is to what extent Dr Kissinger can afford to appear to acquiesce in any policy dispensation that does not meet at least some of the significant requirements of Black Africa, especially in view of the readiness of Mr Jimmy Carter to accuse the Ford Administration of alienating African opinion.

Mr Ian Smith is also winging his way to Pretoria to get a word in, though his Rhodesian critics maintain he is the last sort of person who should ever be asked to contribute to any exercise requiring some degree

of imagination. Whatever good intentions may lie behind the Pretoria discussions, one point will not have escaped the notice of members of the OAU – that the three men meeting to try to ordain the destinies of a

substantial portion of the Black Continent, Vorster, Kissinger and Smith, are all white. In all the circumstances, that point might just strike them as inappropriate. *East London*

Alexander Cockburn

Cold War in New York

'I would consider it dishonourable to leave this post and run for any office, and I hope it would be understood that, if I do, the people – the voters to whom I would present myself in such circumstances – would consider me as having said in advance that I am a man of no personal honour to have done so.' Thus Daniel Patrick Moynihan last October, anticipating one of the more memorable *bouleversements* of the year. Moynihan had of course been accused of using the United Nations as a bully pulpit to promote himself as a senatorial candidate in New York this year. He made the retort quoted above, and a few months later entered himself in the primary which took place last Tuesday. The race between Moynihan, a rich businessman named Abraham Hirschfeld, and no fewer than three liberals – former Attorney-General Ramsey Clark, Paul O'Dwyer and Congresswoman Bella Abzug – was desperately close. Abzug, who had to share the liberal vote with Clark and O'Dwyer, finished only one point behind Moynihan on the first count and instantly demanded another. Nor is it certain that Moynihan will now automatically inherit the Senate seat presently occupied by the conservative Republican James Buckley when the final race takes place in November. Given the Byzantine intricacies of New York politics it is quite possible that the Liberal Party here will now endorse one of the losers in this race and run him (or her), leaving Moynihan and Buckley to split the rightward vote. The hair's breadth nature of Moynihan's presumed victory will no doubt encourage such manoeuvres.

All the same, the accession of the man who has worked for Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon and Ford to the Senate is now a prospect that we have to contemplate. Already, over the months of the primary campaign, it has caused even more than the traditionally copious blood-letting which accompanies any electoral contest in the state of New York. Mrs Abzug, a bellicose and effective Congresswoman, pounded away at Moynihan's fervent praise for President Nixon, had the misfortune to issue a tape doctored to emphasise this fact, and allegedly lost support by proclaiming that she would

not support Moynihan against Buckley if he won the primary.

There were power-plays right down to the finishing line. The *New York Times*, whose endorsement is of great importance, had decided up till the end of last week to withhold any expression of preference. Or rather, the editors had decided on this course. Exercising his inherent prerogative, the publisher and representative of the majority stock-holders, 'Punch' Sulzberger, forced through an editorial endorsement for Moynihan which some cynics even believed to have been partially composed by the candidate himself. In a unique public disclaimer the editorial page editor dissociated himself from this endorsement in a letter to the *New York Times* the following day. Sulzberger, unbowed, killed an attack on Moynihan by his paper's editorial spokesman for blacks which would have appeared on polling day itself.

The closeness of the result will not allay the commotion and bitterness caused by such manoeuvres. Moynihan is one of the few politicians abroad in this soothing year of born-again compassion and low-key cantatas to spiritual regeneration who can really get people mad. Last year normally soft-spoken diplomats in the United Nations positively shook with rage as Moynihan bellowed and thundered for the benefit of the television cameras. This year I have met more than a few liberals who swore that they would in the end actually vote for arch-conservative James Buckley (brother of William F.) rather than help propel the Irish mercenary into office. There is, it should be said, a school of thought which proposes that the Senate is a proper terminal repository for Moynihan, a podium so enveloped in blather that his own contribution to verbal pollution will go almost unnoticed, but this detached approach does not command the majority view.

There are excellent reasons why it should not. Moynihan, as I argued some months ago, is now the most conspicuous representative of and indeed spokesman for the New Right, or the military-intellectual complex. In the pages of the *New Right* journal *Commentary*, in the United Nations and elsewhere he has argued that America stands alone and embattled as a sanctuary for liberty in a hostile world. The nation is menaced by the apathy towards communism of other advanced capitalist countries and by the vindictive greed of the Third World. He detects the rise of a dangerous movement, propelled by 'the assumption that there existed vast stores of unethically accumulated wealth', and behind this move-

NEXT WEEK

Autumn Books

and

Peter Hillmore on
the Slater Walker Report

ment are 'those who saw the future not just in terms of redistribution, but of something ominously close to looting'. 'The truth,' Moynihan wrote in *Commentary*, 'is that international liberalism and its processes have enormous recent achievements to their credit. It is time for the United States to start saying so. One example is the multinational corporation, which, combining modern management with liberal trade policies, is arguably the most creative international institution of the 20th century.' The path from Harvard to the offices of ITT is not always as indistinct as one might imagine.

Moynihan then, in his discourse and in his political attitudes, stands as one of the most prominent articulators of the cold-war consensus which has carried the United States forward over most of the last 30 years. This year the consensus has looked fragile. Quite aside from the natural demoralisation and caution attendant on the end of the war in Vietnam and indeed the slump, this political season has not been particularly encouraging for the new, and indeed the old, Right. One of its prime spokesmen, Senator Henry Jackson, went down to humiliating defeat in the primaries. Ronald Reagan was finally beaten off in Kansas City. One would think, in a rational world, that President Ford would not be too distasteful to those of conservative disposition. But Ford (a) looks like a loser, (b) lacks neo-conservative panache and (c) sponsors Henry Kissinger, architect of détente.

On the other side of the fence – or at least confusingly on top of it – stands Jimmy Carter. Carter has, particularly of late, made some of the proper noises about toughness towards the Russians and zealous support for anything that Israel might do or not do. But all the same the cold-war consensualists have felt less and less inclined to claim him as their own or indeed put much trust in him. Carter is still on record with his promise, however symbolic, to cut the military budget by \$7,000m. In an interview last week he quite casually discounted any idea of going to war in the event of a price hike by the oil-producing states. He is calm about the Third World. He has said that America's war in Vietnam was racist. None of this means that the military budget will not rise in the event of a Carter presidency or that the Marines will not be soon splashing ashore in some part of the globe. But Carter at least does not forthrightly advocate such developments, and this is what has caused discomfort to those who supported Jackson and who have been sponsors of Moynihan's new political career.

'The politics of stability,' said Moynihan in 1967 – at just the time he was joining forces with the 'new' Nixon – 'are not at first exciting. It is only when we come to see how very probably our national life is at stake that the game acquires a certain interest.' If Moynihan finally completes his itinerary from Hell's Kitchen, through Harvard, the White House, New Delhi and the United Nations to the United States Senate he could become an important rallying point for those who feel that 'the game' is going badly, and that the rules in operation over the last three decades need to be stridently and actively reasserted.

New York

Peter Wilby

School for Squalor

Once upon a time, when public expenditure was acceptable and education was politically popular, the Inner London Education Authority planned its showpiece school of the future. It was to be what educational professionals call a 'community school' – a school that allows the rest of us to use its swimming pool, its playing fields, its theatre or concert halls, its meeting rooms and most of its equipment. The architect's brief was published in 1970, the school was to open in 1975 and it was to be built in Peckham as an inspiration to the toiling masses in one of the seedier areas of south-east London.

The school has still not been built, nor is there any prospect that it ever will. And the people who were to have moved into it – the staff and pupils of Thomas Calton comprehensive – continue to teach 960 pupils (45 per cent coloured, an estimated 33 per cent with severe reading difficulties on entry at 11), at five separate sites scattered over a square mile of Peckham. The two main buildings date from 1884 to 1894 respectively.

It has inadequate changing rooms and no showers; the playgrounds are minute; nearly all the lavatories are outside and freeze in the winter; music practice has to be held in large cupboards; paint peels off the walls and plaster falls from the ceilings. From a distance, you would think that Thomas Calton was a maximum security prison. On entering it, you would not be likely to change your mind. Ill-lit, ill-ventilated, overcrowded, noisy (when pupils move from one room to another, it sounds like a bad night on the Falls Road), it is hard to think of a less suitable setting for education in 1976.

Yet it epitomises the fortunes of education in this decade – the school's history is

a story of promises that proved to be empty, hopes that had to be deferred, idealism and dedication that were frustrated, peaceful protests that came to nothing. There are teachers at Thomas Calton who have been waiting 15 years for the promised new building.

The first deferment was in 1971, when Margaret Thatcher was Education Secretary. She hit upon an ingenious formula for frustrating further progress towards comprehensive education without taking the political risk of openly declaring herself against it: she would veto any major new secondary-school building projects, so that resources could be concentrated on primary schools. Over the following two years, Thomas Calton became the symbol of the campaign waged against the Thatcher cuts.

The school closed for half a day to allow headmaster, staff, parents and pupils to march to the Department of Education, carrying a mock coffin. Seventeen local clergymen, led by the then Bishop of Woolwich, David Sheppard, signed a protest letter to Mrs Thatcher, describing the school as 'an offence to normal educational standards'. Pupils' essays, describing how cockroaches were found in cups and how the windows were covered with wire netting, were published in pamphlets detailing Mrs Thatcher's 'act of educational vandalism'.

In December 1972 Mrs Thatcher published her White Paper, entitled *Education: A Framework for Expansion*. It raised hollow laughs in London, which was to be allowed one new secondary school rebuilding project before 1977. Thomas Calton was the obvious choice. In May 1973 the Tories announced further cuts in public expenditure. The ILEA had to defer Thomas Calton again. The election of a Labour Government has brought no new hope. The 1977-78 building allocation for Inner London is £975,000. The cost of rebuilding Thomas Calton is at least £1.5m.

The teachers, commuting between their buildings like urban nomads, still attempt to realise the dream of a school that could help to revitalise a depressed local community. The promises attracted energetic and progressive teachers to Thomas Calton: it is one of the pilot schools for a new London project in maths teaching, it is experimenting with a new curriculum for first- and second-year pupils and it remains open for an extra two hours, four evenings a week, so that pupils can pursue hobbies or take extra examination subjects.

Few teachers leave the school and, even at the height of the London staffing crisis three years ago, it never had to introduce part-time schooling. Yet it was not for them that Mr Mulley set aside special funds when he became Education Secretary – it was for selective schools that were being converted to comprehensive. 'The grammar school



people who have always opposed comprehensives get the resources, while those of us who have soldiered on and supported comprehensives get nothing,' says Ron Pepper, Thomas Calton's head.

Peckham is an inner-city area of multiple deprivation. The children live in worn-out homes, attend worn-out primary schools, move on to a worn-out secondary school, and, these days, frequently leave to sign on the dole. Ron Pepper talks of children who have never seen the Houses of Parliament or ridden on the Underground, who touched a horse for the first time in their lives when a policeman brought one into the playground. Thomas Calton is perhaps the most dramatic example of a squalid

school in a squalid area of London, but it is not the only one.

A quarter of inner-London's children attend secondary schools that were built before 1903. Nationally, the proportion is 5 per cent. Yet the latest school building allocations allow the ILEA £2.40 per child, compared to £6.70 for Greater London as a whole, £12.60 for the metropolitan districts outside London and £24.60 for the counties. Mrs Shirley Williams, the new Education Secretary, would do well to ponder this weekend on how, as far as schools like Thomas Calton are concerned, the priorities of socialism have proved at all different from the priorities of Thatcherite Toryism.

Mervyn Jones

The Two Maos

For a Chinese, he was tall. All his life he had a quality that held the eye; he was impressive to visitors, magnetic to crowds, attractive to women. There was never any question of his dominance where he was on the spot, whatever his official ranking in the Communist Party (which he did not fully control until 1935). Nor was there any doubt of his being the most intriguing and influential personality in the history of his time and his nation, whether he ruled over the 2 million people of the Northern Kiangsi Soviet Republic or the 800 million of China.

But in his appearance, and in the impression he made, he changed more than most men. Edgar Snow, penetrating to his Yen'an redoubt in 1936, described him as 'a gaunt, rather Lincolnesque figure'. The adjectives that fitted him might be tough, sinewy, tense, ardent. Visitors in later years painted a very different picture of the bulky, dignified, reflective elder statesman. Of course, everyone gets older and a lot of people get fatter. But with Mao one became aware of a complexity much greater than the simple effect of time or of power and comfort. There was always a duality, alike in his character and in his thinking. The notion is appropriate, echoing both the Marxist dialectic and the philosophic tradition of China.

To begin with, he was both underdog and overdog. In Shaoshan village, where he was born on 26 December 1893, no family rivalled the Maos in affluence or power. One visualises his father as the quintessential kulak, a character from Zola or Gorki. Hoarding grain during shortages, monopolising transport, lending at high interest, he must have seemed a terrifying figure to the poor. But the big fish swam in a small pool, as young Mao soon found when he ventured into a wider world. Without money or influence, he scraped a haphazard education interrupted by odd jobs – for a short time he was a Shanghai laundryman. When clinging by his fingernails to Peking University he was excluded from lectures because he was a library employee and not a real student.

He went through life (like Stalin and Hitler) with a thick southern accent, comical to cultured ears. So he could identify himself easily enough with the injured and excluded. From this ambiguity, one feels, proceeded the moral bias in Mao's social thinking. A man's inherited or 'objective' class position mattered less than his conduct. In 1927, when Mao was first able to direct the workings of agrarian reform, the code he drew up was entitled 'Regulations for the Repression of Local Bullies and Bad Gentry'.

Mao's last campaign, with its extraordinary slogan of 'Denounce Confucius and Lin Piao', harked back to another lifelong theme; even as a schoolboy he had spurned the paternalistic moralising of Confucius and the mandarin tradition of book-learning insulated from rough experience. His later insistence that professors and senior officials should do their stint of ditch-digging was in part a delayed revenge. As a rebel against his own father, he discarded the ancient virtue of filial respect along with ancestor-worship and the Buddhist faith in which he had been brought up. Old values, old and innocuous customs, cherished art forms such as the Peking opera were to be swept into oblivion in the 'cultural revolution'. Yet he had a detailed knowledge and a profound love of the traditional tales and legends, corresponding roughly to our Robin Hood stories. He was proud to excel not only as a poet – and the quality of his verse is undisputed – but also in the classical art of calligraphy. Among his other roles, he filled to perfection that of the cultured monarch, familiar and esteemed throughout Chinese history.

Similarly he was both patriot – almost chauvinist – and internationalist. His first mentor was Chen Tu-hsi, whose doctrine was that China must learn from the West and rest her hopes in 'Mr Democracy and Mr Science'. He adopted the modernism and pro-Americanism of the early Kuomintang and soon afterwards gave his allegiance to Marxism, which was just as much of an importation. But when he had an opportunity to study in France, along with Chou En-lai

and other comrades, he turned it down; indeed, he was never to leave China except for two obligatory visits to Moscow after attaining power. During his Yen'an period he once made a violent onslaught on returned students who knew more about Greece than about the Chinese heritage. He even added (though the phrase is excised from later editions of his works): 'They repeat quotations from Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, but they've forgotten about their own ancestors.'

For Mao, as much as for any previous occupant of the Forbidden City, China was always Ch'ung Kuo – the name inadequately rendered as 'the Middle Kingdom', but which is really charged with the more forceful concept of 'the centre of the world'. China, he taught, must not be a super-power; by this he meant that China is unique and is above contending for a sphere of influence like the US and the USSR. Revolutionary China, specifically, is a guiding light by whose influence other nations will in the fullness of time attain their liberation. To create satellite states in Stalin's style could never have been Mao's way; history, besides, told him that Vietnamese feelings about imperial China echo Polish feelings about Russia. He may have disliked being forced by General MacArthur to send Chinese troops into Korea – and he almost certainly never intended, though it was the Pentagon's nightmare, to send them to Vietnam. Even Chinese weapons were sparsely supplied to the Vietnamese fighters; courage, self-help and popular backing were supposed to carry them to victory as a repetition of Mao's own triumph.

That was one principle; another, equally constant and more hard-headed, was to judge international alignments strictly by their significance for China. In the 1960s Mao became convinced by degrees that Soviet 'social imperialism' was his main enemy. The crucial year was probably 1968, when he decided that rulers who could press the button for the seizure of Prague airport could do the same for Peking. The necessary counter-move – a rapprochement with the lesser enemy, the US – was hampered by the wholly ideological upheaval which Mao himself had set on foot, for these were the years of the cultural revolution and its international expression was passionate support for rebels against conservative regimes (generally sustained by American power) throughout the world. One recalls, however, that while Red Guards were allowed to disport themselves in communes and factories for months, Mao responded firmly to Chou's appeal to clear them out of the Foreign Ministry.

The invitation to Kissinger followed, although it was the most divisive issue in the inner circle of Chinese Communist leaders and there is evidence that Mao was in a minority. Opposition to the switch of policy was surely the real crime of the ascetic doctrinaire Lin Piao. Lest Lin should muster any Party and popular sympathy on this issue, he was accused of other deviations for which there is no known basis and of hatching a conspiracy whose reality is equally unlikely. Soon Lin was dead – the account of how he died is as dubious as the rest of the story – and

Nixon was admiring the Great Wall. If any Chinese comrades found this shocking, we heard no more from them than from Russian comrades shocked by Stalin's toast to Hitler in the Kremlin in 1939.

It was only the first entry in a record of determined *Realpolitik*. Mao and Chou had been deeply wounded when Nehru, whom they had counted as a friend, failed to respond to their efforts to avert a frontier clash in 1962. Now India, by reason of being on bad terms with China and on good terms with Russia, became 'more reactionary' than Pakistan. And since India was on the side of the popular independence movement in Bangladesh, China approved when the guerrillas of this movement (including Maoists) were slaughtered on the orders of the barbarous warlord Yahya Khan. Revolutionaries, if they fought with guns made in Russia, found themselves dropped like hot potatoes by Peking. This year in Angola, Chinese backing went to armies which were perfectly well-known to be sponsored by the CIA. Bemused European visitors to Peking found themselves treated to eulogies of Nato and the EEC and tirades about the Russian threat worthy of Mrs Thatcher. The most honoured guests were men who were anathema to anyone Left of Centre in their own countries: Nixon, still cherished after his public disgrace, Edward Heath, Zulfikar Bhutto, Franz-Josef Strauss. Their political beliefs, in the ordinary sense, didn't matter – all that mattered was that they were against the USSR. There is no doubt that the policy was Mao's own.

Humane and Ruthless

It may, or may not, have been necessary as a means of fending off the Russian threat and preserving the China that Mao had built. As to that, history will judge. What is certain is that Mao was acting as a Chinese patriot and in the tradition of Chinese centrality. And, in his own eyes, as a revolutionary. He continued until the last year of his life to press forward the revolutionary transformation of Chinese society that was his unending task. To that, at all events, he never subordinated his foreign policy. Teng Hsiao-ping was certainly not opposed to Mao's international perspective, and must have been more congenial to the Heaths and the Nixons than any alternative second-in command. But Teng was suspect of not being revolutionary enough in Chinese terms, so Teng had to go. Mao remained, as he had been for close on 50 years, the intellectual and emotional embodiment of Chinese communism.

He could be humane and lenient, for instance to Japanese prisoners during the war and to the 'patriotic capitalists' who lived surprisingly well for years after communism triumphed. He could also be ruthless; drumhead trials claimed the lives of anything up to 2 million landlords, mostly about as 'big' as Mao's father, during the 1951 land reform. He could be both tolerant and intolerant, author of both the sudden launching of the 'Hundred Flowers' campaign of 1957, setting a record for free expression in the communist world, and of its abrupt reversal. He could scarcely be called a cruel or vindictive ruler when

we recall that his personal losses in the turmoil of history – either killed in battle or executed by the enemy – included two brothers, a sister, a wife and a son. But he could certainly be moved to anger, and at times to action so swift and apparently unpremeditated that it must have left his comrades breathless. The basic contradiction in his character – a fruitful one, on balance – was between its impetuous and ardent side, and on the other hand the caution and patience that he could impose on himself when necessary.

Napoleonic Scale

Seeking for comparisons in history, one thinks of Napoleon. Like Napoleon, Mao was willingly worshipped by many of those he ruled partly because they saw in him a large-scale reflection of their own humanity. Like Napoleon, he was a passionate man. Each of his three marriages (discounting an early arranged marriage) was a love-match, and in each case the love affair began when the previous marriage was overtly binding. When Mao deserted the wife and comrade who had endured the rigours of the Long March at his side, the other comrades who had learnt to respect her put forward a demand unusual in political history: that the new recipient of his affection, a beguiling actress, should never be allowed to play a role on the Party stage. If Mao gave the promise, it was not kept. The last Mrs Mao attained considerable power as *metteur-en-scène* of the cultural revolution, and was able to drop several former stars from the cast-list of Chinese communism. Chou En-lai survived the storm; it is said that he had prudently declined to join in the demand which had offended the lady back in Yenan.

In any play based on Mao's life (and the theme is surely dramatic) the 'obligatory scene' would be set in 1927. Up to that time he had in no way distinguished himself from other communists; his speeches and writings had been left-wing or right-wing as the line swerved; he had held office in the Kuomintang and had not (whatever legend now says) foreseen the bloody clash that was to be forced by Chiang Kai-shek. But for that clash he might well have risen to the party leadership, but as a loyal and uncreative *apparatchik* – a Thorez or a Gottwald. However, the clash did come and Mao was the first to draw the lessons. He abandoned vain hopes, futile alliances and a disastrous strategy; with the Autumn Harvest Uprising, he implemented the alternative strategy. What happened in 1927, in the personal sphere, was that Mao realised that he could be right where everyone else was wrong: the Central Committee, the Party as an entity, the Comintern and Stalin. Greatness had come to him. From then on he never doubted himself, and the rest followed – the heroic defence of the Kiangsi Republic, the miraculous boldness of the Long March, and (once more in defiance of Stalin's advice) the winning bid for power.

It was in 1945 that Chinese communist publications began to refer to 'the thought of Mao Tse-tung' as a fresh and autonomous extension of Marxism. His central theoretical work, *On the People's Democratic Dictatorship*, appeared in 1949, the year

of revolution. His place in history will certainly depend on his 'thought' – or on its effects – as much as on his achievement in restoring to China her unity and her great-power status. Of course, while he thundered against revisionists, he had himself evolved doctrines that revised Marx in the most sweeping fashion imaginable. Though at first it was claimed only that Maoism was an adaptation of Marxism to Chinese conditions, later efforts to convert the international communist movement showed that it was aspiring to world-wide validity. To sum up its meaning, however, is not so easy. Like Leninism, it developed not as an intellectual construction devised in the British Museum but (in part at least) as a reaction to situations not of its author's making – and a later justification of that reaction. Again, the labels are of little help: Mao's China was Stalinist in its authoritarianism and its cult of the leader, but Trotskyist in its faith in permanent revolution. Yet, now that Mao is dead, Maoism is at least immutable, so a definition must be attempted.

Revision of Marx

At its simplest, Maoism is a strategy whereby communists may win power through prolonged warfare instead of sudden urban revolution. The strategy itself was as old as Bolivar or Garibaldi; what Mao did was to apply it to the purposes of basic social change and thus make it available to Marxists. This involved him in a massive revision of a central tenet of both Marx and Lenin – that only the proletariat can take the lead in a socialist revolution, peasants being cast in at best a supporting role. Mao asserted in theory and proved in practice that the peasantry can be a revolutionary class. Often, indeed, he relegated the whole notion of class to minor importance and set 'the people' in opposition to 'the reactionaries' or to imperialism. ('Bad gentry', maybe?)

Thus he held out hopes for what had seemed impossible: a communist victory in a country whose proletariat was immature and numerically tiny. Thus, too, he provided a reasonable explanation for the paradox that revolution had failed in Germany and Britain, where the classical preconditions existed, and succeeded in backward Russia and China. Revolution in the underdeveloped world was suddenly made to look like the likeliest instead of the remotest prospect. Mao's phrase, 'the countryside surrounds the cities', was first a description of his own proved method, then by extension a metaphor prophetic of the 'surrounding' of the major capitalist states by the liberated millions of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Having demonstrated that practically anyone (except an inveterate exploiter) can join the revolutionary ranks, Mao added that this must lead to a transformation of the personality. Here was the origin of 'brainwashing', misinterpreted abroad as a transitive verb and even a form of torture, instead of a replacement of old ideas by new which each person could only carry through for himself. On this basis, Mao asserted that the most apparently impossible goals could be brought within the range of attainment (he was decidedly an idealist

in the everyday sense, and not far from being one in the philosophical sense too). Intrinsic to Maoism was the belief that the character of a given society is decided by the quality of people and by the human relationships established, not by its material level. The cutting edge, the fury and the moral content of the Chinese denunciation of the USSR were derived from Mao's contempt for Khrushchev's 'goulash socialism'. Mao never believed in socialism as an institutionalised resting-place on the way to the higher stage of communism – never, emphatically, in allowing the pace of advance to be governed by statistics of output or consumption. The aim he set himself was to create a higher social form in China than in Russia while ignoring an obviously lower material standard. Permanent – or, better said, uninterrupted – revolution, both in China and in the world at large, remained the heart of Mao's creed until the day of his death.

Here his 'thought' coincided with, and drew dynamic power from, the impulses of his nature. He never grew old in the customary sense of mellowing; he always identified himself with the young and encouraged them in what other comrades must have viewed as excesses. He never believed at all in halts, in breathing-spells, in letting up. It seemed at times that he delighted in chaos – certainly that he loved to surprise everybody. In 1955 he described the collectivisation of the land gloatingly as 'a raging tidal wave'. It had scarcely subsided when, in 1958, the whirlwinds of the commune programme and the 'great leap forward' blew up. Hard facts then imposed a pause; but soon Mao was preparing the most astounding episode of his career and, one is tempted to say, of all history – the 'cultural revolution'. What did he really feel while youthful Red Guards swarmed about the country lecturing and denouncing their elders, while authority and organised activity were disrupted in school and factory alike, while the Party itself was confused and splintered, while his own oldest and closest comrades were traduced and humiliated? It is hard to believe that he planned or even foresaw the full extent of the storm, for several times and in various places the outcome was in doubt and his own authority too was defied. Yet he never settled matters, as Stalin would have, by sending in the tanks. He did not seek to restore order, for order was never high in his scale of values.

And when it was all over, when foreign commentators were writing that China had 'settled down' and that the 'moderates' were in command again, he let it be known that future cultural revolutions would be needed at intervals. Indeed, if the recent campaign 'against Confucius and Lin Piao', culminating in the overthrow of Teng and of scores of office-holders all over China, was less furious and more controlled than the storm of 1966-7, it was equally in Mao's unmistakable style. To the end of his life, he was stirring things up, taking risks, rejecting the comforts of stability. Thus he gave the ultimate proof of his belief in spontaneity, his trust in the untutored masses, his conviction that the revolution must remain revolutionary or lose its soul. That, in the last resort, was what Mao and Maoism meant.

John Morgan*

ITV Comes of Age

Reflections in a golden I promises to be the tone, present company always excepted, of the celebration of independent television's coming-of-age. The unhealthy British obsession with anniversaries will have another outing; to amend that Swiss proverb, unhappy the land which has its history alone to celebrate. What, then, will a Namier or a Taylor of the next century make both of the fact of commercial television's creation, its influence on so many of us, and the nature of our present self-congratulation?

A Namier, I think, would see an unexpected figure playing a vital role in the development of our history, none other than ex-Speaker Selwyn Lloyd, a Liverpool-Welsh attorney who was at the centre – and was this an accident? – of two events which helped break the hold of the two traditionally dominant forces in modern life, to wit, the Tory Party and the BBC. Moreover he did it in two years only: first by writing a minority report to a commission into broadcasting which, given his political clout, most contributed to ITV being created, and secondly by being the instrument, however hapless, of Eden's Suez fiasco.

As it came about, the Suez war failed to destroy General Nasser, which was its avowed object. The BBC, equally, managed to survive the assaults of its competitors, although to talk to some of its workers these days one begins to wonder for how much longer in its present form.

Our 21st-century Taylor might take over here and observe how those years of 1955 and 1956 were a political, imperial and cultural watershed. Was Aneurin Bevan right, he might speculate, in that wonderfully delivered jibe, one of the most hilarious moments in the Commons, to see Selwyn Lloyd as the monkey to Macmillan's organ-

grinder? Politically we see, don't we, parties unable to win majorities and unlikely to, ministers helpless in the face of puzzling economic problems, high unemployment inevitable, and society mourning the loss of growth; and in television we see, amazingly enough, and certainly among programme-makers, a state of affairs where the huckstering new channel is regarded more fondly than the BBC we so loved and admired. The present gossip in the business even has it that the Annan committee has been more impressed by the ITV than BBC performance. There's been a sea-change.

Serious students of society and television will find all this deplorable, commercial television being responsible for most ailments, from illiteracy, crime, the break-up of the family, runaway inflation through heightening material expectation, too little respect for the police, and the general decline of the nation. All this may be true, although I wonder what students of this order suppose working-class life was like in this country before television arrived.

'Cataracts of drivel' I recall was Bernard Levin's fine phrase in the *Guardian* to greet the ITV programmes, which may have been the case. I wouldn't know since, it seems, I didn't watch television until I first appeared on *Panorama* in 1957. Certainly, though, at the time I did believe in the sinister influence of advertising. Being a noble BBC man, phrases like *radix malorum est cupiditas* came seriously to the lips. It was only later that it struck me that perhaps 'ethos' as viewed by some at the BBC might be as harmful as 'cupiditas'. I was very taken by a curious incident, mainly joking, but a little serious, when after I had left the BBC and, later, with some friends had won an ITV franchise for Wales and the West, Sir Huw Wheldon called me 'Judas'. (Some time before he had asked me if I would be interested in being Controller of BBC Wales.) Sir Huw genuinely believed in the morality, I suspect, of what the BBC represented. But by that time I had become more concerned with how best to make resources available to people of talent to make programmes, so that programme-makers were represented at the source of the allocation of funds, and that bureaucracy should be diminished. The BBC, it seemed to me, was moving the wrong way: ITV might be different. Perhaps advertising was not an ideal source of revenue, but the character of work has its own morality, too.

Our company in Cardiff, being a relatively small one, has managed, I think, to create a state of affairs where the programme-makers have a rare degree of power; and throughout the ITV system, by its fractured regionalised character, there is a better chance for the writer or director both to approach and receive a decision from the

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WE'VE HAD MESSAGES
OF CONGRATULATION FROM
HUNDREDS OF ORDINARY
NEW YORK NIGHT CLUB OWNERS,
CINEMA MANAGERS, BARMEN,
AND RESTAURATEURS



people with the budgets than in the BBC. Of course one should show a scepticism at the bitterness of complaints about committees and bureaucracy in any large corporation. None of us would be working in television if we were not neurotic, egotistical and paranoid from time to time. It can be a hysterical trade. For all that, it still seems to me that talent should predominate over both financial and bureaucratic power.

To have the good fortune to be able to interpret the world to a mass audience is an important privilege, which is one of the reasons why it should be done with enthusiasm and wit. Presently the ground of argument about the future of current affairs, news and, by inference, documentary film has been chosen by John Birt and Peter Jay of LWT, through *The Times*. The statistical basis of their, to me, wrong-headed thesis has been brilliantly shot to pieces by David Elstein of *This Week*. I find what one might loosely call their philosophical thesis more harmful.

They claim there is a 'bias against understanding' in television. Their solution would appear to be earnest pedagogy, as if current affairs and news were presented by a don to a captive audience. They adduce an economic theory proposing that a general situation cannot be gathered from a particular experience (to put it crudely). At which point I propose to be equally pretentious, and suggest that for a journalist and a director and a film crew a better starting point in reporting the world to the people would be to trail, however inadequately, behind people who think that you can see the world in a grain of sand, or a rather good poet who argued about seeing the general in the particular.

The danger in the Birt and Jay thesis, as in bureaucracy in broadcasting, is that it helps divert attention and power from the cultivation of that necessary talent for attracting an audience through a passionate concern for a matter and the ability to express it lucidly, using the means of picture, word and music which are the incomparable means and pleasure of television. Reporting and documentary film making are not the same as giving an illustrated lecture. In current affairs, as in affairs of the heart, it is profitable, even necessary, to beguile. It is easy to see, though, at a time when programme companies and the BBC, are finding it more and more expensive to treat television as a 'window on the world', how that Birt-Jay argument might be attractive. A retreat to the Stone Age of TV would be cheaper. That elitist frame of mind which the coming of ITV, for all its brashness, so beneficially brought to an end, and which contributed to the BBC's new approach to reporting in the Sixties, would be in danger of reasserting itself.

My own preoccupation about the future is both more simple and more difficult of solution: it centres on the question of new talent. Many of us, though, of course, in our prime and bursting with energy, have been around a long time. It is hard to find a place for the young; it is surprisingly hard to discover people who believe television is a place where excitement can still be found. That, it seems to me, is what we must care about, rather than foundering in irrelevancies like medieval theologians.

In Poland they said

«Nigdy!»

They said it to Granada Television, and it meant 'Never!'. Granada was there to make a programme about the historic Szczecin dockyard strike of 1971 in which Communist workers openly defied their Communist Government.

Three Days in Szczecin is an authentic reconstruction of the events which brought the country to crisis point. The shipyard workers demanded that First Secretary Edward Gierek, the most powerful man in Poland, come to the dockyards in person to negotiate terms with them. For three days they fought a battle of wits to get him there – and in the end he came. The nine hour meeting that followed is unique in the history of confrontation between governments and workers.

The Polish Government would not allow Granada to film in Szczecin. Indeed *Polityka*, the Polish official journal, told its readers that the proposed reconstruction of events would never take place 'in Poland or Liverpool or anywhere else'. But the programme has been made – based on a tape recording of the entire meeting, eye witness reports, and with the help of the Chairman of the Strike Committee, Edmund Baluka, who is now in exile in England and who has assisted Granada throughout the production.

THREE DAYS IN SZCZECIN
ITV Tuesday 21 September at 8.30 pm

GRANADA TELEVISION



A European Correspondence

When, in 1972, they were all heads of government, Willy Brandt of Germany, Bruno Kreisky of Austria and Olof Palme of Sweden began a circular correspondence about their common problems as European social democrats and their hopes for the future. It has been published in Germany in book form, entitled *Letters and Discussions (Briefe und Gespräche, Europäische Verlagsanstalt)* but not, hitherto, in this country. The following article consists of extracts from their letters.

17 February 1972

Dear Bruno, Dear Olof,

We agreed that it would be profitable to exchange our views on some of the basic questions of social democratic policy, and in so doing to pay particular attention to the problems of 'party programmes and government practice'. Each of us is both head of government and chairman of his party. To a greater or lesser extent we have to adjust our practical politics to the criticism of those people who think our approach should be tougher, more basic. In many cases I not only understand the reason for such criticisms, but sympathise with them, for the day-to-day business of a ruling social democrat cannot always make the long-term direction of his work sufficiently clear. I think we should consider three main themes – fundamental values, understanding of the workings of the state and 'politics for people'. . . I have the impression that although our right-wing opponents have substantially less to offer, they are sometimes better at understanding how to identify with the desires and interests of particular individuals. Moreover, another reason why we must never neglect the meaning and consequences of politics for the individual is . . . that this is the fundamental difference between us and the communists . . .

I would recommend that [the principle of hope] should be one which we bring into our discussion, particularly when we are debating whether our reforms are intended radically to change society or 'just' to improve it. I think myself this may be an artificial distinction, since it cannot seriously be disputed that every reform which extends freedom at all includes an element of change in the system. Olof Palme, in his recent interview on German television, made it clear that even those who seek revolution must realise that, the day after, they will have to decide what kind of reformers they are – ideologues first, or practical men. Even among the non-extremist young, and among some traditional social democrats, one finds the notion that the day after taking over government one can turn everything upside down, inside out.

Perhaps Olof Palme would like to take up this thread of the discussion?

Greetings,

W.B.

17 March 1972

Dear Willy, dear Bruno,

Any discussion of government practice and party programmes is of particular interest since social democracy is more than just a movement with an obligation to manage society. Our duty is to change it.

Throughout our whole history we have conducted an intensive ideological discussion of long-term aims. We have always had to live with the tension between what is currently possible, and our plans for the future . . .

There can be no doubt that society today is more 'politicised' than in the post-war period. People's consciousness – about our own basic problems as well as to do with questions which concern humanity as a whole – is at a much higher level than it was. At the same time one observes an 'apolitical' tendency, a contempt for politics, political work and representative democracy. Our opponents on both the Right and Left make use of this suspension of belief. Both sides accuse us of dealing, both in Parliament and in political groups, with matters of minor importance. Politicians are blamed for neglecting questions fundamental to the continued existence of humanity – such as population growth, technological development, destruction of the environment – or of deliberately avoiding taking a stand on them. At the same time there are demands . . . closer to home, some of which involve a restriction of economic growth and others which demand expansion . . . Our experience today is that people are making increased demands on society, and this is right and fair . . .

If we [social democrats] fail, our society will lose the only possible alternative to conservatism and capitalism. It seems to me that the discussion that Willy Brandt has started *has* to begin with the concept of democracy and the question of 'Reform or revolution' – a total change in the system, or a mere improvement of it . . .

I have always found it very difficult to understand why elitist thinkers, and supporters of revolutionary violence, should regard themselves as the standard-bearers of a socialist and Marxist tradition which has its roots in Western Europe, and in Western European humanism. Their various claims to represent the working class, with their 'better understanding' and greater knowledge of the 'real' contents of Marx and especially Lenin simply mean that each group claims more expertise than the next . . .

Democracy needs, on the national level, to be extended to entirely new fields. Our technical and economic powers play a decisive part in the way we model the future. If the people want to take over, these powers must be democratically directed and controlled, and we must reckon with a higher rate of planning in the economy. In Sweden, for example, we are currently working on a plan as to how the entire land surface should be used.

In my view, the market economy offers no solution to these problems. We are facing demands which are of too great importance to the development of democracy. We cannot leave the necessary decisions to private interests. We cannot allow the search for profit and the psychology of competition to override the future of the environment, security of employment, or technical development. It is not just a question of a planned economy, and more democracy in economic life, but the precise structure of this planned economy and how democratic influence upon it is to be organised.

Greetings,

O.P.

2 May 1972

Dear Willy, dear Olof,

. . . It seems to me that the social democrats of today are distinguished by a remarkable willingness to accept responsibility . . .

The social democratic minority government in Austria was not conceived to fill a short-term vacuum due to the failure of the previous government. It is clear from the government declaration of the time that we scarcely saw ourselves as a merely temporary solution: in our statement we described a broadly-based 'grand design' of our fundamental political position. We needed to prove to the Austrian public our determination to take on responsibility, for there was a mood of fear, to a small extent, and to a greater extent, one of amazement. We recognise the principle of making our society more democratic. But for this to be possible we need the readiness and the ability of the people to play a part in the continuing process of strengthening the popular will. When one realises that some 90 per cent of the population are prepared to vote in elections, but some 40 per cent have no serious interest in political information, or in being party to decisions, we see what a task lies ahead of us . . .

I would like now to turn to other social democratic questions. The process of economic concentration is particularly strongly expressed today by the existence of multinationals: it is a tendency which without question has been reinforced by European economic integration. In Western Europe some 25 major companies belong to the exclusive 'multinationals' club'. The only control over the big multinationals are national boundaries – but they leap these virtually without hindrance. So one of the most important requirements of national and international social democracy is the creation of a 'multinational' – or better, an international – forum of public opinion, which could work as a corrective to this particular power development . . .

Greetings,

B.K.

17 September 1972

Dear Bruno, dear Olof,

. . . I would now like to take up some points from Olof Palme's letter. We are

bound to return several times to the concept of democracy and the question of reformism versus revolution . . . I would also like to say something about the threats with which the human race is now faced. Our position cannot be one of starry-eyed optimism, but nor should we, naturally, allow pessimistic resignation to take over. Mankind can only face up to the challenges which threaten its whole existence when they are openly presented.

Man has beaten the plague; in many countries he has defeated famine, and tamed capitalism. Even the danger of a totally destructive war can now be brought under political control. After the détente treaty – with which you both helped me so much – I realise far more than I did how important it is always to think problems through and through . . . We need a better-informed society, and this involves the active co-operation of the many.

Under the heading of 'democratisation', I mean not least the systematic cutback of privileges. This is the central question when it comes to improving individual opportunities in life, developing natural gifts, and the growth of participation in its many forms as a means of common responsibility and a way towards peaceful solutions of social conflict. As far as I am concerned it is not just a mere assertion, but a demonstrable fact that every improvement of democracy in the sense of realising the citizen's right to education, to more information, and to more participation, necessarily takes on the character of a social-cum-political structural reform. And this explains the way right-wing, conservative forces resist the embedding of the principles of democracy in social and economic areas just as they do in education.

This problem may be greater here than in Sweden, because of the drastic breakdown in our democratic tradition. But I agree that wherever democracy has once put down roots the road backwards is that much harder. The self-styled 'revolutionaries' realise this: so do the right-wing conservatives. It is from the same root that their parallel resistance to the politics of genuine reform grows . . . I would like here to put forward some thoughts about the position and methods of the Socialist International . . . What is its reality? The reality of a great, if not untroubled, tradition. The reality of basic convictions, and a programme in all essentials common to all Western social democratic parties. The reality of parties which in western Europe can exercise considerable influence over the development of their countries. And the reality that there are social democratic parties in other parts of the world, and even more parties and movements which do not belong to the social democratic tradition as we understand it, but are related to it . . .

Greetings,
W.B.

8 May 1973

Dear Olof, dear Willy,

In his last letter, one of the questions raised by Willy Brandt was that of the relationship between democracy and the market economy . . . We know that in earlier times the relationship between private

property and the means of production were at the centre of political consideration of the control of power, since these were what made the pre-conditions.

But in many countries these pre-conditions have changed. Particular areas of the economy – e.g. heavy industry – have been nationalised or are conducted as partnerships. So the classic relationships between private ownership and the means of production has to some extent collapsed and been replaced by new forms of ownership. Looked at like this, the Marxist concept of 'expropriation of the expropriators' is no longer valid. Many major concerns in various sectors of the economy are kept going by state contracts and investment – as for instance in the aircraft industry and the electronics industry. It is a sign of our times that different forms of ownership exist alongside each other.

This does not of course mean that the question of control of the means of production and the principles of the economy have become redundant: quite the contrary. Galbraith and a series of other authors have come to the conclusion, in their studies of the power structure of modern industrial society, that far too many people working today are dominated by people who control the means of production, without owning them. Under the new type of capitalism, control lies in the hands of the managers, who act as an 'oligarchic and self-expanding group'. When this power of industrial management is further strengthened by co-operation with modern top-level bureaucracy, that ruling class is all-powerful in the economy, and the individual, the citizen, is nullified . . .

How, then, can the new forms of authority in modern industrial society be controlled? I think that above all we need to consider the various possible forms of participation in workplaces and institutions. This participation can be considered part of the whole process of democratising society, as it is when used in schools, universities, political parties and so forth. It is wrong to talk of a policy of 'appeasement' towards capitalism, as one did in the Thirties; there is no question of simply transferring decision-making to a middle rank, who would take it upon themselves to understand all the needs and interests of the grass roots. What should distinguish us from the age of enlightened absolutism must be our tireless efforts to make it possible for the masses to become capable of autonomous decisions, through a programme of political information and education. The fact that this cannot be done overnight should not let us lose sight of such a decisive social democratic aim . . .

Greetings,
B.K.

10 May 1973

Dear Bruno, dear Willy,

. . . Willy Brandt's last letter reached me during the West German election campaign, which we followed here with interest. And now we know that social democracy has won a great victory. As social democrats we were naturally delighted for a sister party with which we have such close contacts . . .

Willy Brandt has spoken of a realistic picture of humanity and said: 'After the

great eclipse of the sun, after Auschwitz and Hiroshima, after Nuremberg and My Lai, we have learnt to what barbarism mankind can return, and what strong forces there are opposing the organisation of peace and a society fit for human beings.' I am of the same opinion. A few years ago I wrote a newspaper article about My Lai. I came to the conclusion that this incident, and similar events in other wars, other countries, under different systems showed that men, in certain situations when society breaks down and hate and fear and self-contempt can freely develop, are capable of brutalities which are diametrically opposed to any concept of a civilised society. The people involved do not by any means have to be monsters. It can happen, of course, but often they are normal, average people. There is probably, suppressed in most of us, a tendency towards brutality and inhumanity. No one can know how he would react in a comparable situation.

But my picture of man is optimistic because I believe humanity to be capable of great solidarity, of understanding other people's circumstances, of responsibility for a common future . . . Evil is not absolute; barbarism breaks out in particular situations. The point is to avoid such situations . . .

At present we are facing an election campaign in Sweden which is bound to be particularly tough . . . We have several years of economic problems behind us. The disturbances which all industrial nations have experienced have affected us, too. We were forced to deal with the problems without a parliamentary majority. On such occasions the responsibility of governing often becomes a burden, weighing not only on the cabinet and the parliamentary party, but also demanding a high measure of loyalty and foresight from party members. But social democrats cannot withdraw from this responsibility: this would only have led to further disquiet among the people. The fact that we managed to cope is first and foremost thanks to the party. I am continually astonished by the inner strength of our party, and have often said to myself that this capacity for resistance, this patience, are a true buttress of democracy.

The current debate about the limits to growth and the quality of life has had the effect, among many people, of creating contempt for the material progress that has been achieved and for the policies which deliberately encouraged growth. In my view, this attitude shows a lack of respect for the older generation's experience of poverty and hardship – the very experience which led them to fight for the abolition of poverty. There are still many groups with an inadequate standard of living. And the older generation was fully aware what industrial democracy meant . . . Our criticism of modern society, therefore, is not directed against the high standards of living, the efficient methods of production, and the economic growth which it has achieved and which make reforms possible. It is directed much more against the price of progress and the forms of growth. So we have tried to answer the question: can efficiency and humanitarianism be combined? And we believe that to a great extent the answer lies in a reform of the condi-

tions of work . . . These problems are of direct practical interest to every wage-earner in Western Europe . . .

Greetings,
O.P.

30 July 1973

Dear Bruno, dear Olof,

. . . In my view we have now reached a different interpretation of 'improving the quality of life', which hitherto has been far too one-sided, concentrating only on the environment. Workers, after all, spend more than a third of their day at their place of work. What that place is like, and what its social surroundings are like, is an important indication of the 'quality of life' . . . We drew attention to this in our last election campaign and returned to it in the government declaration made at the beginning of this year with our coalition partners . . . I would like to connect this with Olof Palme's suggestion that we must move away from the basic belief developed during the post-war period – namely, that work is a necessary evil, but leisure hours provide the opportunity for emancipation and self-development; also that higher consumption is sufficient compensation for unfulfilling work. We could then challenge some primitive illusions. Besides the simple idea that 'bad' work can be made up for by 'good' consumption, there is the unworthy view that all forms of unpleasant and unsatisfying work can be abolished: this is certainly not so. Here we come back to the point that only the way in which work is organised can increase its interest, and give people a chance to learn and develop, and so to increase the workers' educational motivation . . .

I would now like briefly to return to the mistaken idea that we need not fear an anti-democratic backlash. Bruno was right to remind us of this. I remember only too well that here in Germany it only took the 1966/67 recession to vastly increase the number of votes for right-wing radicals (it is not quite accurate to call them neo-Nazis). In fact I do not believe that the present German generation would collapse in the way their forebears did in the Thirties: history does not repeat itself so simply. But on the other hand I am deeply disturbed by the way in which democratic parliamentary life in a number of West European countries is marked by tendencies towards splits and disorder . . .

Greetings,
W.B.

29 April 1974

Dear Willy, dear Bruno,

Parliamentary life in Europe is in a chaotic state at the moment: there are fears on all sides for the future of democracy.

The long-serving Swiss Finance Minister Celio recently remarked: 'The Seventies are proving to be a decade in which it is particularly hard to govern.' It is an observation simply proved when one looks at the electoral pattern. The Austrian and German social democrats have managed to stay in office by broadening their parliamentary basis. And the Swedish social democratic party, the only one in Europe, has gone through two elections without losing

power. So there is something to be cheerful about. But none of us could say that there are no problems . . . Moreover, Great Britain, Italy, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, the Netherlands, Belgium and elsewhere have all seen several changes of government.

. . . We have generally come to realise what a high price has been paid for growth; the increase in unemployment, environmental damage, massive changes in the structure of institutions, all kinds of social decline – and all brought about by technology and the concentration of economic power. And then of course there is the ever-increasing rate of inflation, which has a great deal to do with general alarm about the future . . .

The days of simple belief in progress are finally over. Instead, we are constantly reminded that our raw materials are limited, that changes in the environment and in the climate endanger the basic needs of human life; that the population explosion and food shortages are taking on an ever more threatening dimension.

. . . The progressive forces of Europe, now that the system is weakening, must find their way back to their roots, to their democratic and social ideals. We are not certain to succeed: it could lead to polarisation. The disenchanted Left, which used to be loyal to monolithic communism, is split now among Stalinists, Trotskyists, Leninists, different splinter groups and sects all quarrelling in their elitist way . . . and there are similar movements on the conservative side . . .

. . . Social democracy is the strongest political force in Western Europe today . . . This still does not, however, enable us to conduct policies which are strictly our own. The social democrats have a parliamentary majority only in Austria: in other countries there is either a minority government, or a coalition with bourgeois groups. This puts social democracy in a difficult position. Success means that one has a hand in the formation of policy. But this means that one must also take responsibility for developments in society to which citizens react negatively, whether or not one has any chance of influencing these developments. Our success is not great enough in most European countries to conduct a genuinely social democratic policy . . . If we want to use the chances and the parliamentary strength which we do possess, to achieve practical results, we must intensify cooperation between our parties. It is clear enough that our successes and failures have a mutual effect. We need only watch how eagerly the bourgeois press seeks out grievances and problems in social democratic countries. When I was travelling the country during the last general election, I was followed by a herd of conservative journalists from all over Europe who had all come to Sweden to see the decline and fall of the welfare state at first hand. They must have gone back pretty disappointed.

Greetings,
O.P.

19 October 1974

Dear Friends,

Some months now since I resigned as Chancellor . . . and have begun to con-

centrate entirely on party work . . .

. . . Perhaps we should make ourselves more clear to people, and state even more convincingly than we have so far done that ensuring the freedom of the individual requires particular political conditions. When we consider the rights, security and freedom of the citizen – especially the weak and the deprived – we cannot leave things to the 'free play of forces'. If civil rights are not to exist on paper alone, citizens must be able to make use of them. But here – and this is especially true in Germany – we come up against the hostile insinuation that by 'democratisation' we intend that more and more *formal* majority decisions should be taken. It is important, therefore, to make it clear that we are not thinking of decrying experience or responsibility. Only an instructed and wise democracy, under the conditions of modern industrial society, can guarantee and strengthen the rights of the individual against the oppressive power of economic interest groups, anonymous organisations, and authoritarian bureaucracy.

Greetings,
W.B.

15 April 1975

Dear Willy, dear Olof,

. . . Many people believe that the Socialist International actually decides which parties are following the true dogma . . . [But] democracy in Europe has not only developed in different ways, it has suffered relapses of world-wide significance – such as in Italy, Germany, in Austria. It has not developed so smoothly everywhere as it has in Britain and the Scandinavian countries. Then there are dictatorships with several parties. Some communist parties have nominally different parties, and in other continents there are countries where only one party is permitted, but within this party different lines of thought and social groups develop, and the conflicts within them can well lead to a form of democracy . . .

To put it plainly, there can be movements in many Asian, African and Latin American states which can and should be partners in discussions with social democrats, without our demanding from them the strict criteria laid down in our own statutes. All that we need to do is to discover whether the pre-conditions for democracy exist in a particular country, to what extent the regime may use methods which we cannot tolerate . . . I feel we must adopt this kind of open-minded attitude, if we are to remain in contact with developments in other continents.

For us, the essence of our political aims is an increase in democracy and democratisation. In Africa, Asia, and Latin America, however, there are developments which are a long way from our ideals: there are countries in which political democracy is not necessarily the first phase in the democratisation of society. But, even if we accept all that, we must hold fast to one basic rule. Social democrats can never associate themselves with the rule of terror or force. That would be to betray our deepest beliefs about the future of man in society.

Greetings,
B.K.

London Diary

□ Cabinet reshuffles have become rather like Budgets. First the weeks of excited expectation – then the sound of escaping air. Last weekend's long-heralded Downing Street announcement represented Jim Callaghan's first real shot in this area: when he became Prime Minister last April he confined himself (with one notable exception – of which more hereafter) to more or less consequential changes. This time, we were told, he was actually going to make it *his* cabinet. Yet it turns out to be very much the mixture as before. And not only in terms of personalities. Take the case of the Education ministry. Between 1964 and 1970 there were four successive Education Secretaries, giving each one of them an average of 18 months in the job. In 1974-6 we're doing even better than that. I welcome Shirley Williams's appointment but there must be something wrong with a system, or rather a Downing Street sense of priorities, that makes her the *third* Education Secretary in two and a half years. Similarly with Transport. Bill Rodgers goes there – if with a cabinet seat – in the wake of two predecessors, neither of whom was allowed more than 15 months. They were, of course, Fred Mulley and John Gilbert – and now, lo and behold, they're riding together in tandem at Defence! In one respect, however, Jim Callaghan has shown almost exaggerated deference towards a continuity principle. When Harold Wilson resigned, some of us remarked how lucky his PPS was in being popped into office after a mere three months' personal service. Not to be outdone, Callaghan has now propelled *his* PPS into the Government after a bare four months as keeper of the PM's door. At this rate they'll soon need to instal an escalator in No 10.

□ The meeting of Labour's home policy sub-committee – which led to Tuesday morning's lurid headlines ('Benn and Co. accuse Jim', 'Barbara's Vengeance') and Tuesday night's hatchet job by Denis Healey – started, I am told, quietly enough with Frank Allaun making his ritual plea for there to be an executive statement on housing and the homeless. He was immediately backed up by Ted Hickling of the UGMW who, in turn, found a supporter in Eric Heffer – on the entirely valid ground that, with over 200,000 unemployed in his own old construction industry, he could hardly be expected to do anything else. But unemployment provided the 'trigger'. In no time at all, largely owing to the impassioned advocacy of Barbara Castle, the committee had widened its indictment to the whole range of the July cuts. The original proposal was that Transport House's research staff should prepare a form of words for presentation first to the full executive and then to conference. But in the end the drafting was left to Barbara Castle, who scribbled the eventual scathing resolution on the back of an envelope. Strangely, that did not please even all the left-wing members of the committee – one or two of whom were to be heard muttering that a mere six

months ago Barbara would have been found *defending* the Government's policy, not *attacking* it. In any case Barbara's resolution merely repeated a statement that Eric Heffer had got passed at the committee's July meeting – and which is actually printed in the party's annual report. But then this is the time of year when 'star billing' becomes a matter of concern to each and every constituency-elected member of the NEC.

□ By all accounts, the General Council of the TUC became pretty irate with the leaders of the National Union of Seamen in the course of their long confrontation at Brighton. Partly, of course, it was because the seamen rather spoiled the impact of the overwhelming vote of the Congress to continue with the social contract by choosing to announce their intention to stage an all-out strike while that debate was still in progress. And partly because some General Council members regard Mr Jim Slater and his colleagues as, well, somewhat obtuse. In their anger, they threatened to invoke Rule 13 of the TUC's constitution, which allows for the suspension, and ultimate expulsion, of unions whose conduct is adjudged to be detrimental to the interests of the trade union movement, or contrary to the declared principles and policy of the TUC. Not that that would have helped. Far better, I would have thought, to hold a TUC inquiry into the little-known arrangement under which the shipping employers pay the NUS something like £275,000 a year – more than half the union's annual income – for employing 20,000 coloured seamen on British ships. Especially as those seamen are paid only about a quarter of what NUS members earn.

□ I hear that newspaper editors in Ireland have been meeting to discuss ways of resisting the growing threat of censorship in the Republic. Their fears, which were at first centred on the Irish Government's new emergency measures, and in particular by an extraordinarily threatening interview which Conor Cruise O'Brien, the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, gave to Bernard Nossister, of the *Washington Post*, have been redoubled by events at Radio Telefis Eireann last week. In an overnight putsch the station's main current affairs programme *Seven Days* was scrapped, its editor fired and all those involved forbidden to talk to the press. *Seven Days* was an institution on Irish telly. It combined some of the most consistently serious coverage of Ireland's multitudinous problems with enormous popularity – no easy feat given the already stringent restrictions imposed by law on Irish TV. Inevitably it was sometimes controversial. A programme on the long Irish bank strike this summer is believed to have caused considerable offence to more than one vested interest. The decision to close it is still something of a mystery, but it does seem clear that Irish editors and journalists in television and newspapers are all going to be under increasing pressure. Some organised expression of support from their British colleagues might seem in order. Perhaps Lord Goodman, who waxed so eloquent about the dangers of censorship last year, could organise a measure of support from British editors.

□ In an age of mass media, demonstrations find themselves in a recurring dilemma. They either end up in a flurry of flying police helmets in Whitehall, accompanied soon after by outraged headlines in the *Daily Express*, or else they die in somnambulant Sunday boredom, to be banished to the 'News in Brief' small print. Even Madame Allende's dignified speech failed to raise the status of the Chile Solidarity Movement's rally last weekend. Squeezed in between pigeon-ridden tourists and the lions of the British Empire, we listened to worthy calls from the platform for the international isolation of the Chilean Junta and the end of Western imperialism. But rarely did anyone speak with enough conviction and originality to breathe life into an atmosphere of ritualistic moral outrage. One point, though, did emerge – Crosland has promised to accept no new arms orders from Chile; but one of the two submarines built in Scotland for Chile has yet to be delivered, although most of the £22m bill has been paid. As someone said, there's blood on that money. How about keeping the submarine and pocketing the cash?

□ Prices at theatre bars are notoriously high, but the National Theatre's appear to have surpassed all. The National incidentally is your theatre, in case you had forgotten. At the Olivier, due to open next month with *Tamburlaine*, the only food currently on offer is game pie, a well-known popular dish at the popular price of 90p. However, in the unlikely event of becoming emboldened by their 40p-a-glass wine, quell your spirits and do not question their prices. For, as students of Marlowe will know, the playwright himself died not far from the National in a tavern in Deptford in 1593, killed, according to the government inquest, by one Ingram Frizer, in a drunken brawl over the 'reckoning'.

Crucifer

This England

Prizes: £1.50 book token for first entry, £1 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

□ *Sir* – You report that the Home Secretary has said he has no power to ban Thorsen coming here to make a film (showing Jesus in the nude, love-making and drinking sessions), yet no such problems arose when the Government banned a cricket team from Rhodesia. – Letter to the *Daily Telegraph* (David Leach)

□ Mr Dennis McShane, National Union of Journalists, read out a recent headline from a Fleet Street newspaper: 'Asian father of 12 on £100 a week social security'. He said: 'We wrote to the managing editor saying it was unacceptable. He wrote back saying if the word Asian was not in the headline people might have thought he was Irish. – *The Times* (Susan Rose-Smith)

□ The Whitefriars run a guesthouse, a pottery, a tea-room and a bookshop. Their household chores are done by Spanish Carmelite nuns and they lead a cheerful bachelor life. There are eight novices in the Order, and they have formed their own private pop group. – *Radio Times* (Joan Wyatt)

J. J. Fookes

Council Tenant

Our beloved Conservative media will have a hard job getting me to feel inferior about living in a council house. What has been a consistent theme over the years, drawing to a crescendo with Auberon Waugh's recent television programmes, is the attempt to place a stigma on people living in council houses. In this attempt to maintain two nations, the trick seems to be to find council tenants who have a sense of inferiority – and there are many in a system that has bred it for a hundred years – and then get them to say their piece in front of the camera, so that council tenants, to all appearances, stand condemned as 'slovens' and parasites who ought, by implication, to rush out of their council houses to the nearest estate agent and take out a mortgage for a private house.

A house is a house to me, not a status symbol. But I remember making the first moves to buy a house in 1956. What happened? No sooner did we find a house to suit us, and vicariously feel that 'the great British property-owning democracy' and Tory affluence really meant something, than the pit where I worked was threatened with closure. What was I supposed to do? Go ahead with the purchase on the double-never-never and trust to Tory providence and the capitalist system to help me out? Oh no, I am much too cautious for that. Suppose I had done it and failed to keep up with the mortgage payments. Wouldn't I have been charged with being 'irresponsible' – and by the same people who now try to bait me for living in a council house? And wouldn't I have deserved it too for depending on them?

If this was the experience that made me stick to council housing in 1956, what is the situation now in 1976 when you cannot rely on a job lasting ten years, never mind for life? Is the need for council housing increased or not? If the Tories say that the current level of social security expenditure is too high and yet expect people to take mortgages and accept necessary redundancies, they are living in a different world from the one I live in.

What are the other choices open to me if council house tenancy is judged to be so disastrous to my ultimate welfare? Taking a rented private house or flat would only bring in a landlord sneering at me for being dependent on him for a roof over my head. Don't say it wouldn't happen because Rachman did worse than merely sneer, and his sort would probably reappear if Margaret Thatcher got into power. (I have not yet heard of a person who believes in and practises private enterprise as a principle, rather than being trapped in it as a predicament, who doesn't believe that the rest of the human race exists for his private profit and to be dictated to by him.) If I really wanted to make myself feel inferior I would allow myself to become dependent on a 'free market' housing system instead of

democratic council housing. For though we cannot yet get rid of directors and managers who treat working people with contempt, we can dismiss councillors. Although they should be able to, neither private tenants nor mortgage holders can boast of this form of democratic control.

Weighing it up, there is even less to support the myth of parasitism. The council house in which I live was built at a cost of £1,000 back in the early 1950s. After 20 years of being a council tenant I must have paid £2,800 in rent and maybe more. Unless the capitalist system is more extortionate than I think it is, that should have taken care of the interest, administration and maintenance charges. So for the next 20 years, most of what I pay in rent should go to generate more council housing. If I were conservative-minded I suppose I should be bitter and twisted about it and demand a reduction in rent. But I can't work up any excitement about it

either way. It just seems to be normal to want other people to have the same decent housing that I have had.

In the area where I live there is in fact no great difference between the quality of the housing on the council estate and the nearby private estate. In some cases, the standard of private house building is worse so it cannot be for this reason that council housing is frowned upon. There are isolated examples, of course, of people on the council estates who neglect and damage their homes and who fall into the trap of treating themselves like sub-humans, but why should these examples necessarily be regarded as much worse than anything that happens on private estates?

You would have to be a blind and deaf individual if you did not blame in some measure the political campaign against council housing waged in the Conservative press and especially in the last few weeks by Auberon Waugh. Their attacks only serve to reinforce the existing legacy of social snobbery that tries to breed a sense of inferiority into the majority. The working class are not clear of these attitudes yet. But we will be a lot nearer progress when the working man has stopped falling for this class trick which conditions him into thinking that council housing cannot be as good as private ownership.

First Person

Arthur Marshall

Is This a Record?

I've never really cared much about moving with the times. I prefer things to remain exactly as they are. Motor-cars have never been quite the same for me since people stopped winding them up at the front with a handle. In those days, starting the thing was a perpetual problem and challenge. Major Beamish, keen to take the wife and nippers for a breezy run to the Hog's Back (where Bulldog Drummond, as you'll recall, proposed to Phyllis Benton in comical stage-Irish, a treat that doesn't come every girl's way), would pop on his fawn plus-fours and get to his garage, the home of the family's bullnosed Morris, a full hour before departure time. With Mrs Beamish, a pleasing figure in her neat tailor-made and skunk choker, fluttering anxiously to and fro ('Can't you get her going, dear?'), he would flood (whatever that may involve) the carburettor (ditto) and bravely crank his way through a series of loud bangs and explosions. The subsequent chugging through Godalming was done with a real sense of success and achievement and frequently merited a celebration tea at Fuller's, with two goes of walnut layer cake all round.

There were two other things that needed, long ago, to be wound up. Model aeroplanes now work, I gather, on petrol and are radio-controlled, but something tells me

that it was more fun to twiddle the propeller while strands of black bunjie writhed until one dared twiddle no further. But best of all the windings, and even now I miss doing them, were those necessary for gramophones.

In childhood my great friends were Joan and 'Boysie' (I never knew any other name) Brimblecombe and their Barnes nursery contained a priceless object. It was wartime, Great Wartime, and their Uncle Hubert had not only gone courageously down to the sea in a ship but under the sea as well in a submarine. He used to take with him – and it must have been a very early model, his portable gramophone (can it have been a Decca?) – doubtless hoping to play it while submerged, but there was a snag. The Navy was fearful that Clara Butt's majestic chest-notes, given full-est play in 'My Ain Folk' might reverberate through the water, a fine sound conductor, and reach the ears of old Gerry, slyly lurking silently on the sea-bed nearby. So Uncle Hubert had had to abandon music and had kindly passed on this cherished instrument to his niece and nephew, together with a splendidly large pile of records, and all day long we cranked and played and cranked and played.

We took it in turns to choose a record. Joan had just begun dancing lessons and was especially fond of a tuneful piece called

Roger Woddis is on holiday.

'Dance of the Disappointed Fairies'. Second time round she would plump for 'The Tickle Toe' or 'The Glow-Worm Idyll' with, in reserve, musical tributes to our gallant allies - 'Dance of Ivan Ivanovitch', 'Valse poudrée' and 'Marche Italienne' (a bit uninspired, though we didn't realise it then, and even a bit backwards at Caporetto). When not in dancing mood, she tended to go for one of the single-sided violet celebrity discs which were expensive (7s.) but brought such joys as honey-voiced Alma Gluck requesting to be carried back to old Virginy.

Boysie was more robust and belligerent and was, as indeed we all were, firmly anti-German, and for him there was quite a choice. There was a humorous talking record called 'The Kaiser on the Telephone'. There were 'I'm the great bit pot of Potsdam', 'Who bashed Bill Kaiser?' and 'The Hindenburg Trot'. He particularly enjoyed 'Belgium put the Khibosh on the Kaiser', historically an extremely doubtful claim, and the rattling choruses of Harry Dearth:

Of course you know I'm Gipsy Joe,
Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho!

All these records are now referred to as 'the old 78s, not always correctly. Some indeed were 78 r.p.m. but the recommended revolutions per minute varied and you had to keep alert and continually adjust the speed regulator. Kreisler's 'Berceuse' and John McCormack's 'Mother o' Mine' revolved at a sober 77. 'Angels Guard Thee' (sung in Russian) required a feeble 75. Things hotted up for the Peer Gynt Suite, 'In the Hall of the Mountain King' whirling round at 82, while the fastest clip of the lot, 88, was for 'Shipmates o' Mine'.

I am afraid that I, irresponsible as ever, chose records that were, to me, pleasingly dotty. There were two songs, 'Where did Robinson Crusoe go with Friday on Saturday Night?' and 'What ho! Mr Watteau', that had me in stitches. There were also endless numbers that had agreeably jiggy tunes but which meant very little: 'Yacka Hula Hickey Dula' and 'Yaddie Kaddie Kiddie Kaddie Koo'.

For such a recent invention, the range of record was very wide and, interspersed with all this jollity, there were thoughtful moments. There was Dr Grenfell CMG, 'Adrift on an ice-floe', a year or so before Lilian Gish in *Way Down East*. Commander Peary was to be heard discovering the North Pole and Sir E. Shackleton led a 'Dash for the South Pole'. There were three, heaven help us, Budget speeches (Asquith, Lloyd George and Churchill). British troops passed through Boulogne (clump, clump, to martial music) and a captive nightingale sadly warbled.

But how, you wonder, do I remember all this? I don't. Most of the nursery pieces are with me still in memory's echoing chambers, but otherwise I am lucky to have before me, reprinted at £5.25, an HMV Catalogue for 1914-1918. And what publishing firm would nobly venture on such an esoteric subject? David & Charles, of course, of Newton Abbot, public benefactors. If your interests happen to lie in left-handed railway guards with ginger hair who worked on the LNER in 1922, David & Charles have probably produced a book about them.

Letters to the Editor

The PM and Private Schooling

Sir, 'How can intelligent Labour supporters believe that the Labour Party is pledged to support and further state education when the leader, Mr Callaghan, has failed to persuade his own daughter?' writes a Mr Donald Churchill in your issue of 3 September. Quite so, just how can such supporters not realise that it is the bigotry and intolerance which Mr Churchill so clearly displays which is driving so many one-time supporters of the Labour Party out of politics altogether?

Is it not just possible that Mr Callaghan, who as well as being an intelligent supporter of the Labour Party may also be an intelligent parent, realises that the last thing a father ought to do is to attempt to force his opinions upon a grown-up and intelligent married daughter - to say nothing of an exceedingly articulate son-in-law? It is for them as parents, not for a grandparent, even if holding a different view, to decide how their children should be brought up. But, indeed, does Mr Callaghan hold a different view? It is just conceivable that he is aware (as obviously Mr Churchill is not) that this country is a party to the general declaration on human rights and to the European Convention. It is accepted as a recognised human right that parents have the right to decide on the education of their children.

Finally, I suppose it is just conceivable that Mr Callaghan's daughter and son-in-law feel it fairer to their child to give her the best form of education now available, rather than sacrificing her future interest in the hope of gaining some political advantage for the grandfather from Mr Donald Churchill and his like.

HARTLEY SHAWCROSS

House of Lords

The Kosygin Saga

Sir, Commenting on the story about Prime Minister Kosygin's mishap in last week's issue, I maintained that he had a heart attack. This was my information then. Further investigations, however, have convinced me that he did not have a heart attack after all. According to this more reliable version of the incident, while fishing near his Dacha on the outskirts of Moscow, Mr Kosygin slipped on his boat and fell in the river. As a result he suffered some facial injuries and was badly shaken. This ties in with the insistence of many Soviet sources that he will resume duties soon.

It also means that I was too sanguine about the 'plant' in the first place. It now seems more than likely that the story was planted to discredit Kosygin's ability to work in the future.

DEV MURARKA

Moscow

Selection of MPs

Sir, At least 38 resolutions calling for automatic reselection conferences in constituencies with 'sitting' Labour MPs - to replace the present practice of automatic readoption of such MPs - were submitted to this year's Labour Party annual conference. Despite the fact that this was the largest number of motions on any single subject, every one was ruled out of order by the Conference Arrangements Committee.

Whatever one's view on the question of whether or not a Constituency Labour Party should have the right to insist that its MP supports the programme on which our party

was elected, it is clearly a matter of concern to a large number of Labour Party members. We know of 23 CLPs - in addition to the original 38 - who have written or sent resolutions to the NEC urging that 'reselection' be debated at Blackpool.

We write as conference delegates from CLPs who passed resolutions urging the above change of procedure. We believe that it is time that this question was resolved and therefore intend - at conference - to move that the Conference Arrangements Committee's Report be referred back and that the 'reselection' resolutions be included in the conference agenda. We would like the courtesy of your columns to ask all Labour Parties to instruct their delegation to support this move.

TONY DAY

South Gloucestershire CLP

MARGARET FENELON

Hammersmith North CLP

VERONICA MCCLAREY

Chipping Barnet CLP

ROBERT PEAKE

Wanstead and Woodford CLP

NICK SIMON

Putney CLP

ALAN WHITEHEAD

Southampton, Itchin CLP

PETER WILLSMAN

Canterbury CLP

MIKE GRABINER

Brent East CLP

113 Cairnfield Avenue
London NW2

NCCL and the Closed Shop

Sir, In 1970, NCCL's executive committee presented a report to the annual general meeting on the issue of the closed shop, which concluded that 'the closed shop involves a conflict of civil liberties, which may be irreconcilable. Any individual who is subjected to a compulsion of any sort thereby has his civil liberty reduced. On the other hand, other individuals may have their own civil liberties undermined as a result of an individual's refusal to participate in collective action.' Successive discussions within NCCL have not resolved the conflict.

Paul Johnson does not, however, help the debate by ignoring the context of union organisation. He claims that the legal privileges of trade unions were once justified by the 'poverty, hardship and discrimination' faced by ordinary union members - conditions which have been overcome for at least some groups by determined trade union organisation. But large numbers of working people still suffer from low pay - especially, although by no means only, non-organised workers. Many suffer from discrimination on grounds of race, sex and political activity, and from unsafe and unhealthy working conditions. Ironically, Mr Johnson ignores completely the closed shops organised by comfortably-off professionals.

It is also dishonest to isolate the closed shop from the range of infringements of freedom suffered by many employees. Compulsory membership of occupational pension schemes, for example, and unilateral amendments of the terms of such schemes by employers; the unfair dismissal of over 1,000 workers each year, who remain effectively unprotected by law, although entitled to compensation, since no court or tribunal can force an employer to reinstate a worker.

The European Human Rights Convention protects freedom of association. Such freedom, and the right of individuals to organise in

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Solomon Islands Port Authority; East African Harbours Corporation; Gambia Ports Authority; Kelang Port Authority; Kuching Port Authority; Nigerian Ports Authority; Penang Port Commission; Port of Aden Authority; Sierra Leone Ports Authority; Singapore Ports Authority.

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East African Railways Corporation; Indonesia State Railway; Jamaica Railway Corporation; Kowloon-Canton Railway.

Malayan Railway Administration; Nigerian Railway Corporation; Sabah State Railways; Sierra Leone Railway; Sri Lanka Railway; Sri Lanka Transport Board.

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Bank of Tanzania; Bank of Uganda; Bank of Yemen; Bank of Zambia; Belize Currency Board; Bermuda Monetary Authority; Board of Commissioners of Currency, Singapore; Brunei Currency Board; Caribbean Development Bank.

Cayman Islands Currency Board; Central Bank of the Bahamas; Central Bank of Barbados; Central Bank of Cyprus; Central Bank of Gambia; Central Bank of Jordan; Central Bank of Kenya.

Central Bank of Nigeria; Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago; East Caribbean Currency Authority; Fiji Central Monetary Authority; The Monetary Authority of Singapore; Reserve Bank of Malawi; United Arab Emirates Currency Board.

BROADCASTING, POSTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRICITY:

Bahamas Electricity Corporation; Bahrain Electricity Department; Solomon Islands Electricity Authority; Ceylon Electricity Board; Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation; Dubai Radio and Colour TV Service; East Africa Power and Lighting Co Ltd.

East African Posts and Telecommunications Corporation; Electricity Supply Commission of Malawi; Fiji Electricity Authority; Fiji Posts and Telecommunications Department.

Guyana Telecommunications Corporation; Jordan Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs; Jordan Telecommunications Corporation; Mauritius Central Electricity Board; National Electricity Board of the States of Malaysia; National Electric Power Authority (Nigeria); Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation.

Public Corporation for Electric Power, People's Democratic Republic of the Yemen; Sabah Electricity Board.

Sarawak Electricity Supply Corporation; Sarawak Posts and Telecommunications; Sierra Leone Electricity Corporation; Singapore Telecommunications Authority; Swaziland Electricity Board.

Thailand Metropolitan Electricity Authority; Voice of Kenya; Western Nigeria Government Broadcasting Corporation; Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation Ltd; Zanzibar State Fuel and Power Corporation.

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Eastern Caribbean Farm Institute; Enugu Institute of Management and Technology; Fourah Bay College; Gulf Technical College, Bahrain; Hong Kong University; Ibadan University; Ibadan University College Hospital; Kaduna Polytechnic; Lagos University Teaching Hospital.

Makerere University, Kampala; Malawi University; Mara Institute of Technology Library; Mauritius University; Mombasa Polytechnic; Nigerian Civil Aviation Training Centre.

Njala University College; North East College of Arts and Sciences, Nigeria; Uganda Technical College; University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

University of Calabar; University of Ife; University of Malaya; University of Nairobi; University of Nigeria; University of Singapore; University of South Pacific; University of West Indies; Zaria College of Arts, Science and Technology.

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groups for their own protection, do conflict with the rights of individuals not to be coerced. That is why NCCL has, after numerous debates, decided to remain agnostic on the question of the closed shop; it is because we recognise the conflict, in a situation more complex than Mr Johnson allows, and not because we are in thrall to some mythical union bureaucracy or insensitive to the plight of individuals, that we have not adopted the position which he advocates.

PATRICIA HEWITT
General Secretary

National Council for Civil Liberties
186 Kings Cross Road
London WC1

That Tribune Meeting

Sir, Could I please have a little advice from Peter Paterson ('Spotlight on the TUC', 10 September) to assist me in conducting future meetings? Is a meeting convened to provide all the speakers with an opportunity to speak and all the listeners to hear with reasonable ease or should it be arranged as an entertainment for a continuously shouting one fifth of an audience? Should a microphone be provided as a means of assisting speakers and listeners or to permit speakers to shout over perpetual interruption?

I heard only one example of a genuine heckle – the one which he quoted – so could he please give me an example of another so that I know what to listen for in the future? Does chanting by an organised and uninformed mob constitute 'heckling'? How can a chairman 'peremptorily' close a meeting after he had 'twice halted the proceedings to warn . . .' in the space of an hour? Is the Right to Work going to be achieved by killing the Right to Speak or should chairmen in future acknowledge only the Right to Bawl?

NEIL KINNOCK

House of Commons

Irreverence on the Left

Sir, As the NS comes into our home each week via my spouse, I find it rather compulsive reading. Apart from (in my opinion) the really good articles which do appear, I have this perhaps morbid interest in discovering how bigoted, perverse, supercilious and irreverent many of your critics can be. They often seem to be needing to prove something to themselves as much as anything.

I have just read a piece (very sardonic), by Donald Gould called 'Miracle in the Sky' (NS 27 August). All right, he wishes to be atheistic, anti-'Establishment', BBC Radio 4 etc. (Incidentally, I enjoy the 'ragbag and brantub show' *Today*. It helps get me off to work early.) He first loftily and condescendingly tells the story of the elderly gentleman who suddenly recovered his sight on a flight from Australia to this country. He then proceeds to scoff at what he supposes for himself to be the numbers of listeners who must have taken this to be a modern miracle. Next, he learnedly lectures us as to the scientific reasons for the happening. Then to my real indignation, although I do not profess to be a true Christian, he mocks faith-healers and ultimately has a go at the greatest healer of all time, Jesus Christ. How does he dare to say 'Clever Jesus' so sneeringly?

I am not a socialist, but respect those who sincerely are: but I am forever pondering why it seems to be impossible to be a left-wing socialist without knocking religion and religious people. Nowhere does this seem to be as apparent as in your journal. One reason suggests itself, but whatever the reason it is extremely regrettable. Why sneer at what so many people find a source of comfort and inspiration in their lives? Perhaps you assume that all your

readers are atheists. 'Clever Jesus'. No! 'Clever-clever' Donald Gould.

DAPHNE M. M. CHESTER

77 Wood Street
Kettering, Northants.

Back-Room Porn

Sir, In a civilisation whose basic principle is that it is acceptable for people to be exploited, it is, I suppose, to be expected that the exploitative element in pornography should not be seen for what it is. The Home Office working party now proposes that there should be 'back rooms' in bookshops, in which people over 18 may purchase pornography. Are we also to have back rooms in which racist literature may be purchased, cock-fighting takes place, and perhaps a bit of bear-baiting? So long as we don't actually see it in the streets, debasing behaviour is acceptable: could anything be more immoral?

A friend recently saw in Amsterdam pornographic magazines in which children were being exposed in sexual acts. Would these be permitted in the Home Office back rooms? Ah – they were being exploited in another country, and besides, 'the wench is dead'. In *Studio International*, current issue, in an article on performance artists who crucify animals and let their blood and excreta drip on to their bodies, it is argued that even the Moors Murders of children may be seen as works of art. Would the Home Office allow this in the back room?

The 'permissive' approach studiously avoids any insight into the true nature of pornography. In a recent psychoanalysis study Professor Robert Stoller of UCLA argues that all pornography is perverted, and his definition of perversion is that kind of sexual activity which seeks to harm the other person. His book is called *Perversion: the Erotic Form of Hatred* (Harvester Press), and he concludes that pornography has as its fundamental dynamics the urge to hurt, hostility and hate. He does not agree with me, I should add, that more controls are necessary – because, he says, he is an American. But he calls pornography a 'massive dehumaniser'. If pornography is likely to unloose further hostility and hate into society, then it is certainly very doubtful if it is acceptable in the 'back room', not least because in tolerating it in any form we implicitly endorse the humiliation of those who take part. Stoller, for instance, says that in pornography showing bestiality the women may be mentally defective or psychotic victims of the photographer. If we are to have bestial pornography in the back rooms of bookshops, the Home Office will be condoning the exploitation of mentally ill people, and putting the clock back over hundreds of years, surely? I should like to know how this toleration of the exploitation of the dignity of the person may be squared with socialist thought, and the policy of a Labour government.

DAVID HOLBROOK

Longacre
Stapleford, Cambridge

PEN Power

Sir, As a participant in last month's International PEN Congress, I was both baffled and envious to learn of the writer-in-exile who attended to 'screw' ('The Power of the Pen', NS 27 August). I have seen more opportunities for, and more evidence of, this activity during a single walk with my dog in Holland Park than during a whole week at the Penta Hotel. Few writers seemed to be there to consummate their love for someone else; but certainly a number seemed to be there to consummate their love for themselves.

As a member of the Theme and Speakers Committee, it was my duty to remind those on

the platform not to speak for more than 15-20 minutes. Hans Keller, by general consent one of the best to address the audience, announced that he would speak for 12½ minutes and, give or take five seconds, did precisely that. Others were no less brief and effective. But it was sad to see certain eminent figures afflicted by a kind of verbal St Vitus's Dance, during which the patient's mouth opened and shut uncontrollably and he was unable to sit still.

To suggest, as Julian Barnes's writer-in-exile did, that it would be possible to attend a congress in Egypt for £60 is nonsense. The sum for anyone other than an official delegate would be at least twice that from this country. This explains the regrettable absence of young English writers from our congresses. A young academic or businessman can expect to receive his expenses if he attends a similar function; a young writer pays for himself. If the Arts Council were to offer to pay for half-a-dozen English writers under 35 to attend each PEN Congress, it would do much to rejuvenate the organisation both in this country and abroad.

FRANCIS KING

19 Gordon Place
London W8

Sir, As the Irishman quoted in your mock biorama of this year's PEN Congress (NS 27 August) may I express the hope that this effort by your Mr Barnes (I am relieved at his confessions of ignorance and insularity) may not invoke any of the libel cases A. J. P. Taylor prophesies on another page – several of which might indeed have been considered had not all shape, form and names been excluded from this report.

One wonders whether its author might not have himself been screwed when composing it (screwed, of course, in a previous epoch's use of the term), but Pope – so distastefully invoked to stick false feathers into arrant measure – no less than Yeats himself, would be full of both approval and concern to see that the wells of emotion (no less than the sinks of smut) extend so far.

Those now administering the leavings of *The Nation* and *The Athenaeum* from Great Turnstyle (sic) might also be concerned at such introduction to a conference of positive value to international understanding and détente.

HUGH MCKINLEY
Literature Editor

Athens Daily Post
Syros, Greece

Socialist Verities

Sir, The inaccuracies in Mervyn Jones's review of Robert Bathrop's book, *The Monument*, about the Socialist Party of Great Britain (NS 20 August) range from the trivial to the libellous. 'Endless conferences,' he says, when we have one per year. A clause in our principles which 'forbids any collaboration with anybody for any purpose' he says, when the clause in question states only that as a political party we are opposed to all other political parties. For good measure he accuses us of having a cast of mind which leads to people getting shot (though with dubious consistency, since he immediately acknowledges our scrupulous democratic procedures). As if this were not enough, he then has the cheek to admit that in our 'unvarying pessimism' we haven't been all that wrong.

We have always had as our goal the establishment of a society where wealth is literally owned in common, and we have consistently argued that as long as there exists instead a society where wealth is produced for profit, problems such as unemployment, poverty and bad housing will be endemic. The present, under a Labour government, could hardly be a better time for demonstrating these contentions.

But we do not thank Mr Jones for patting us on the head for being right. For he saves his greatest insult until last. Implicitly lumping us together with supporters of the Labour Party and other Leftists, he says that with 'even' the Labour Party down to 37 per cent of the votes we are not the only ones to feel bitter. But unlike them we shall rejoice when the Labour Party has zero per cent of the votes. Socialism will be established when the working class cease to put their trust in any professional politicians whose only mandate is to run capitalism, and start to think and act for themselves.

Since Mr Jones appears to have grasped none of this, I wonder if he has considered the arguments of the Socialist Party of Great Britain at all. It may be that his sources are the problem. He should read some of our official literature and then make up his mind.

BILL VALINAS
General Secretary

Socialist Party of Great Britain
52 Clapham High Street
London SW4

More on Driberg

Sir, I would suggest that in his eloquent, valid and entirely laudable defence of Tom Driberg Gore Vidal has misunderstood one small aspect of A. J. P. Taylor's remarks. Taking Taylor to task for his use of the words 'flagrant and unashamed' apropos Driberg's homosexuality, Vidal asserts, quite rightly, that homosexuality is anyhow not 'something to be ashamed of'. Hear-hear; but . . .

As one of the ilk myself (certainly unashamed though not, I would guess, especially flagrant) I well recall how in pre-Wolfenden days the prevailing moral climate of public opinion, together with the legal fact that one was a blackmailable felon, did produce a powerful implication that there was something guilty to be concealed. I would suggest that where environmental pressures were towards stigmatisation and a massive imputation of shame, even though there was *in fact* nothing shameful, it is surely relevant to remark that Tom Driberg had succeeded, where many didn't in remaining uncorrupted by such pressures.

The 'heterosexual' comparison is not really a valid one, since society has not put it about, however erroneously, that heterosexuality is *per se* a cause for shame. A more apposite analogy would be that of illegitimacy, which could not possibly be construed as in theory grounds for guilt-feelings, yet in practice often is.

JIMMIE PEARSE

19 Westbere Road
London NW2

Salute Across the Sea

Sir, May I congratulate you without reservation on the tone and content of your leader entitled 'Not John Bull's Other Island'? It made heartening reading for those of us who, while holding in abhorrence the vicious and futile activities of bigoted gunmen, find ourselves wondering if many English people are not congenitally incapable of making the sustained effort at fairmindedness and sympathy which the so-called 'Irish problem' requires as a minimum condition of its solution. Confronted with the rest of the English media and public opinion, one has come again to expect with regret that when the mask of impartiality slips (as it does all too easily) behind will be revealed a daunting countenance expressive of rudeness, hostility, presumption and ignorance.

NUALA O'DONOVAN

Elmina
Monkstown, Co. Cork

Unfair to Musicians

Sir, Edward Greenfield (NS 3 September) perpetuates the myth that 'the members of the four independent orchestras are all self-employed'. Casually employed, perhaps, but not eligible for Class II contributions, in the view of the Department of Health and Social Security as expressed in one particular case. A member of the London Philharmonic Orchestra got a ruling in 1958 that he should be an employed person, Class I, and was rewarded for his pains by losing his job. The big four orchestras have gone on insisting that their members should stamp their own cards in full knowledge of this decision.

The members themselves won't make an issue of it since (a) they are under the illusion that Class I contributions mean PAYE tax (not necessarily true and undoubtedly used as a red herring); (b) the DHSS insist that each case must be considered individually, not corpor-

ately; (c) the more informed members recall the fate of their luckless colleague mentioned above.

A further aspect of this state of affairs is that extra players, who are not shareholders of these orchestras, are similarly regarded by the big four as self-employed, despite a more recent ruling (again of necessity in one individual case) that they should be Class I employed. A member of one of these orchestras recently said to me: 'Disregarding the legal aspect, I accept that a self-governing orchestra could be said to employ itself, but morally extra players should be employees.' Most of us think that the method of raising funds for our social security is lunatic but that is no excuse for depriving people of their legitimate right to unemployment benefit.

FRANK HAWKINS

St Margaret's
Broomfield Avenue
London N13



The National Association for Freedom

Introduction by the Chairman
Lord De L'Isle, VC, KG.

Through long years of history Great Britain has been committed to the defence of freedom.

It was our tradition of personal liberty and freedom which, by its natural encouragement of independence and enterprise, made Great Britain great.

Because we have led the world in promoting these ideals and have accepted them as our natural birthright, we have not recognised the need to defend them for ourselves. Inexorably and by degrees however, those freedoms which we have championed and which should be the right of all men are being taken from us.

Since it was launched in December 1975 the National Association for Freedom has been working for the strengthening of the foundation of freedom in this country. It is concerned with freedom of choice, particularly with regard to the right whether or not to belong to a union; freedom of expression and freedom of communication; freedom of enterprise; the right to choose services other than those provided by the State; freedom in medicine, education and other professions; freedom of property; a financial and tax system which encourages rather than destroys individual freedom and initiative; the freedom of Parliament.

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The Association has a vital task to perform now and in the years ahead. De L'Isle



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BOOKS & ARTS

Edward Mendelson

Editing Auden

Collected Poems by W. H. AUDEN edited by Edward Mendelson *Faber* £8.50

The year before Auden died he told me he expected to live long enough to compile another *Collected Shorter Poems*. Then he described the changes and additions he had in mind, and looked pleased when I wrote it all down. Evidently he was taking no chances. He knew that his rejected and rewritten poems would someday re-emerge, once again youthful and unwrinkled, but he wanted the poems he had nurtured to a watchful maturity to make a case for themselves as well. His last thoughts were almost entirely retrospective. He told a friend that he was thinking of writing a long poem – his first in almost 30 years – on the model of *The Prelude*. In its place we have the *Collected Poems*, and in it, his final retrospective thoughts on his canon and his text.

Auden's death prompted some memorialists to demand that his revisions be thrown on the scrapheap of literary curiosities, and that his executors supply immediately a collected edition based on the early texts. Even if I were convinced – and I am not – that Auden's revisions always inflict damage on his poems, I should hesitate before publishing a collected edition based on my rejection of the author's judgment and favouring my own. It has been argued against Auden that an author is the worst critic of his own work. This strikes me as nonsense. When an author transforms his clumsy and fragmentary first drafts into the balanced and forceful work he eventually publishes, he is engaged in an extended act of practical criticism which later critics will scarcely equal. (An author is seldom able to paraphrase his work but, as a critic has argued recently in these pages, paraphrase is not the same as criticism.) Another argument, that a poet's rights of revision somehow stop at the point of publication, amounts to a fetishism of print and paper. A poem may have been revised in manuscript, typescript, galley proof and page proof. There is no reason to stop at the printed book.

No reason except the 'reason' of sentiment. While there is much to admire in Auden's early poems that his revisions altered or removed (and I admire some poems that never found their way into print at all), I suspect that much of the sentiment for the early texts arises, at least in part, from a nostalgia among certain readers for the literary excitements of their youth. Younger readers, who have no personal or emotional ties to the early Auden, tell me they prefer the revised versions. After I had compiled the *Collected Poems*, using

(as moral obligation and editorial judgment demanded) the latest available texts, I was gratified to hear a schoolgirl explain sensibly and in detail just what was wrong with the early versions which the later ones put right. The real value of this judgment is not in the critic's youth, but in her agreement with the judgment of the aged author. Auden was not infallible when he wore his revising robes – although I think he was right most of the time – but it is the author's judgment which, finally, has *authority*.

'Authors can be stupid enough,' Auden wrote,

but they are not always quite so stupid as a certain kind of critic seems to think. The kind of critic, I mean, to whom, when he condemns a work or a passage, the possibility never occurs that its author may have foreseen exactly what he is going to say.

Surely no reader, even the most sympathetic, will deny that Auden's revisions sometimes weaken the force of his lines, but few readers seem to consider that Auden may have had good reasons for doing precisely that. His changes often deprive individual lines of the vivid immediacy that made so deep a first impression on his early readers. But the local vividness of a line or passage can blind a reader into missing a poem's overall shape. As he grew older Auden became increasingly distrustful of vivid assertions, increasingly determined to write poems that were not breathtaking but truth-telling.

The early poems are for love-affairs; the later ones for marriage. The change in manner is conscious and deliberate, but well-meaning critics seem to find its purpose difficult to grasp. Auden's late manner has few stunning images or resounding phrases, nothing in the lyric mode. Instead there are sentences that meander through a dozen stanzas; long meditative forms; not very compressed epigrams; arguments in which all the details are in balance. What critics find difficult, I think, is that Auden's poems no longer conform to the romantic and modernist critical decorum in which critics – in which our whole culture – is trained. Romantic and modernist poetry is a poetry of self-consciousness and its discontents, of personal reordering of a perceived world, of epiphanies and lost moments of vision. For this kind of poetry Arnold's 'touchstone' is the most appropriate test, for the touchstone is the sign of the heightened moments of self-consciousness and sublimity which much of the poetry of the past two centuries has striven to achieve. The touchstone standard persists in hidden forms in critics who would scorn it in the original: Housman's hair standing on end, Pound's Image and Vortex, Eliot's objective correlative, the 'cathected passages' of psychoanalytic criticism, are all variants

of it. But Auden developed a kind of poetry which was far less interested in the acts of self-consciousness and the workings of perception than it was in the order of the world outside the self – both the world of ethics and the literary tradition – a coherence that does not need an artist's perceptions in order to exist. It is here, I think, that Auden's real greatness lies, not in his early lyrics, excellent as they are. And for Auden to work towards this kind of poetry, while also trying to satisfy the touchstone standard, would have been inherently dishonest. Auden's late poems, and revised early ones, ask for a more unfamiliar, but equally ancient, method of reading and judging, a method which values the burden of the complete work over the local assertions of its elements. Auden wrote in 1939, 'O all the instruments agree / The day of his death was a dark cold day.' He revised in 1958, 'What instruments we have agree . . .'. The prose fact is unchanged – instruments are man-made, all we have is all there are – but the poem now relies less on rhetorical heightening, more on the balance and plausibility of its statement.

Auden claimed that he never, consciously at least, revised for ideological reasons. Not surprisingly, no one believed him. There is a certain truth to the claim none the less. When he found jarring sound or slovenly diction or what he came to think of as windy rhetoric, he revised it – and when he did, he generally took the opportunity to change the ideology as well. His most notorious changes tried to take the wind out of the rhetoric, and as ideological statements tend to get inflated at the best of times, it was those which usually got revised.

As early as 1944 Auden dropped, from 'September 1, 1939', the stanza which included his single most famous line of verse, 'We must love one another or die'. He explained that this was a lie, that we must die anyway – an argument some critics find frivolous. Perhaps they prefer literature to tell lies: that way it frees itself from responsibility to the world of ethics, where lies have real and painful consequences. 'We must love one another or die' is magnificent rhetoric, but it was eventually put to use by one of the great liars of our time. During the 1964 American election, when Lyndon Johnson was publicly denouncing his opponent as a warmonger while privately planning to bomb Vietnam into the stone age, Johnson's ad agency devised a TV 'spot' which opened with a little girl counting the petals on a flower, then interrupted her with a stern male voice counting down from ten to zero – when the little girl was abruptly replaced on the screen by a nuclear explosion. This left viewers rather shaken. Before they recovered, they heard Johnson's voice intoning, 'These are the stakes: to make a world in which all of God's children can live, or go into the dark. We must love each other or we must die.' (The dark, and possibly the children, are also echoes from Auden's poem.)

In defending the revisions, I do not pretend that the early versions and the rejected poems should be left in an out-of-print limbo. Auden himself said only that he didn't want them reprinted 'during my lifetime'. To prepare an edition of them, that is, to turn away from what one knows

were Auden's final intentions, one must however have some theoretical basis for one's editorial practice. There is a large and frequently numbing literature on this matter, which offers essentially two plausible justifications for rejecting an author's known intentions. (The justification that the critic knows best is not one that I consider plausible.) The first is the argument that an author sometimes yields to social or political pressure to make changes that will satisfy shifts in sensibility or the regime. (Dickens's late blurring of Fagin's early Jewishness is an example of the one; of the other, the changes Brecht made in *Lucullus* at the suggestion of the East German Premier.) The second argument is that an author in middle or old age is no longer the same person who wrote his youthful work, and thus has no more right to alter it than any other elderly pedant.

Except for some minor details involving libel or obscenity, the first argument does not apply to Auden. He had nothing to gain from his audience, and everything to lose, by revising or rejecting his most popular poems. He made ideological changes, but they were not for the convenience of the authorities; his one quotation from Lenin survived to the end. This leaves the second argument, which probably overstates the discontinuity of even a poet's life, but is not without merit. There were indeed turning-points in Auden's life, and by far the most cataclysmic was 1939. In that year he moved to America, fell in love (the real thing, for the first time, he said – it grew into a kind of marriage), and began, tentatively at first, his return to the Anglican church. 1939 provides the least arbitrary standpoint from which to establish the text of an edition of the early work. I have used it in compiling a selection of early poems and prose, to be published a year from now as *The English Auden*: the texts in that edition will be the texts as they existed in 1939. There is room for two editions of Auden: a canonical *Collected Poems* with texts dating from Auden's death in 1973, and a non-canonical *English Auden*, edited as if from the perspective of 1939.

Both the *Collected Poems* and *The English Auden* restore some manuscript readings which were never published in Auden's lifetime, for reasons of obscenity, libel or mere courtesy. In all editions of *The Orators* one of the 'enemy faces' has been 'the June bride'; this was Eliot's palliation for the manuscript's 'the fucked hen'. Elsewhere in *The Orators* Auden celebrates the birth of a friend's son by cataloguing those whom this infant hero will vanquish. Among them, in all editions,

Hearing the fireworks, the saluting and
the guns,
Bob and Miss Belmairs spooning in Spain,
Where is the trained eye? Under the sofa.
Where is Moxon? Dreaming of nuns.

The names are from the Isherwood-Upward Mortmere fantasies, and sound like private jokes. They aren't. A manuscript notebook unmasks them as contemporary worthies:

Hearing the fireworks, the saluting and
the guns,
Middleton Murry's looking in pain,
Robert and Laura spooning in Spain,
Where is Lewis? Under the sofa.
Where is Eliot? Dreaming of nuns.

Anyone who edits 30,000 lines of poetry finds he must resolve hundreds of minor problems, and must do so in the knowledge that, no matter how diligent he is, he is certain to commit blunders. In a textual tradition as complex as Auden's there are inevitably cases where diligence is not enough and an editor cannot avoid using his own judgment. Most such problems arose in *New Year Letter*, where Auden made different revisions to his original typescript when preparing the British and American editions, and later forgot about the British revisions when he reprinted the American text. A manuscript of much of the poem survives, so when the British and American texts disagreed, I could usually tell which reading represented Auden's second thoughts. This made it possible to add some forgotten revisions to the *Collected Poems*. But the MS of part of the poem is lost, and that part includes a passage which, in the British text, speaks of Galileo (at least I think it's Galileo) as

him who ended, as he went
Past Pinuccini's monument,
The slave-owners' mechanics . . .

The American edition and (because they derive from it) all later editions print 'an archbishop' in place of 'Pinuccini'. I kept the archbishop, but I have no proof that he was not a rejected first thought who survived by accident. 'Pinuccini' has the virtue of specificity, and I would have been tempted to resurrect him if, after scouring monumental encyclopedias of architects and archbishops, I had been able to find out who he was. I should have asked the girl who defended Auden's revisions. Doubtless the name is one which every schoolchild knows.

Bruce Page

David's Sling

Moshe Dayan: *Story of My Life Weidenfeld*
£6.95

Most cricketers have encountered a type of bowling called 'military medium'. Steady, unvaried, and derivable from diligence un-mixed with flair, it enables regimental matches to be disposed of respectably, if somewhat tediously. A literary equivalent exists in the style of military memoirs. Information is trundled out steadily and reasonably accurately – but with a regularity of pace and pitch which tends to stun the flighty civilian mind. General Moshe Dayan labours worthily within this tradition,

demonstrating that a Jew can be just as impeccably dull as any Anglo-Saxon Ismay or Eisenhower. Apart from the odd passage of standard-issue rhetoric Dayan has the same flat, informative tone for every moment in the hectic career of the state which, for many people, he personifies. Thus:

On this morning, June 7 1967 . . . the situation turned out to be as I had expected. After Jerusalem had been encircled and cut off from Jordan, the enemy troops who remained laid down their weapons. [Of Israel's most intoxicating moment since the inception of the state.]

It was clear that the situation at the Canal was less satisfactory than on the Golan. The Egyptians had succeeded in crossing the water-obstacle. [Of the moment when in 1973 it became clear that the ritually-despised Egyptian Army was a new and formidable antagonist.]

But connoisseurs of the military memoir know that tedium is not related to interest in the way it may be in other sorts of book. Large tracts of writing are there purely because the military mind – especially when busied with slightly unfamiliar activities – is deeply attached to proper form.

When the successful soldier sets out to write his memoirs, it appears that his first step is to send out for a few representative books – which he has measured, weighed, counted for number of words and analysed structurally. He then attempts something along the same lines, and because successful soldiers are usually diligent and clever men, the result often closely resembles a book. But, as in the case of military music and military justice, the resemblance must not be pushed too far.

When reading such a work, as Murray Kempton observed in the case of Eisenhower, one must remain minutely alert for the occasional operative sentence among the formal lines which march endlessly past the eye – the ultimate reward being a patchy instinct which occasionally gives warning that one is coming. When Ike tours Korea, there are set-piece tributes to units visited, off-the-peg inserts about the horror and grandeur of war, recognitions of old buddies doing first-rate jobs of soldiering – and, buried away, the one chill line in which Ike, having inspected the whole American position, decides that it is time to cut the losses.

What is to be mined from the 516 pages of Dayan? Little enough about his personal feelings – the book is chiefly a record of battles fought, and mostly won, recalled in something like total detail: and one piece of substantial analysis may be extracted immediately. According to ordinary military arithmetic, as evolved in wars between the settled states of Europe – calculations about the numerical superiority required in attack, and about the casualties that a good unit can endure without disintegration – the existence of Israel could scarcely have been

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defended, let alone enlarged. The perception of the Jewish soldiers of Dayan's generation was that such formal arithmetic was not, for the moment, relevant – because the Arab nations couldn't produce military formations of quality measurable on the European scale.

This was not an obvious perception when it was first made, and it has nothing to do with questions of individual valour. (Noticeably, Dayan is not the kind of racist oaf who thinks it does.) People who understand the articulation of a modern army are thickly distributed in Europe simply because European working people have been schooled to mass military action at least as long as they have been schooled in the techniques of industrial production.

The founders of the Israeli Army, heirs of European military technique, had the insight to ignore most of its essential rules-of-thumb during their first three wars against the Arabs. The basic tactical pre-occupation of the orthodox commander is to secure his flanks: in most of Dayan's battles, he neither knew nor cared whether other Israeli forces were linked alongside him. He frightened even Ben-Gurion, who thought that 'an attack should be planned and carried out methodically'. Ben-Gurion, Dayan judged, had learnt and heard much of the Arabs and of war, but 'had not close, personal, first-hand knowledge of either. He knew *about* them, but he did not know them.' Taking a battalion commander's course in Britain in 1952 Dayan (already an Israeli general) was not much impressed with the tactical lore acquired in combat with the Wehrmacht, for 'we had to take into account the conditions of warfare which were specific to us, confronted as we were by Arab armies'. In planning the Suez campaign, Dayan had some difficulty convincing French officers that the Sinai blitzkrieg could really be accomplished against such numerous defences.

Israel's tragedy may be that the calculations of Dayan and his friends succeeded too well. The blazing successes of the Six-Day War convinced Israeli citizens – and less astute Israeli officers like Arik Sharon – that a transient advantage of military sociology could be taken as a heaven-born human superiority. Israelis thought little, between 1967 and 1971, in terms of concessions. Why prepare for surrender? We can always thrash them again.

But, given the desire, any society can learn to run a passable army. The Arab armies of 1973 were perhaps not brilliant, but they were good enough to make some real use of their numbers. As Dayan acknowledges, they contained many fewer units which could be overawed by simple head-long attack, the Israeli army's instinctive method.

The Yom Kippur war was a return to the ordinary battlefield. As Dayan says (apropos his tour of Vietnam):

There is a primitive and leaden logic to warfare: in an open engagement between two unequal forces, the strong defeats the weak. The victories of the Davids over the Goliaths were rare enough in my country in biblical times. They are rarer still in the kingdom of tanks and guns.

There, dealing with someone else's country, is a rare flash of coloured language. For

his judgment of Israel's own position, Dayan returns to sober khaki:

Israel's military strength has virtually reached its quantitative limits . . . Therefore, the way in which Israel must secure a balance of forces against the Arab world . . . lies in improving the quality of her weapons, a quality which should ensure that any Arab attempt to destroy Israel will involve the destruction of her attackers.

That, dully stated, is the Doomsday Option. Dayan, basically a military technician – whose abilities derived from his ability to respect, and know, a certain class of Arab society – may well be the least guilty of a generation of leaders who allowed Israelis to believe that the 'leaden logic' of military power might be suspended for ever in their case. The worst that can be said against him is that, while eschewing for himself the frantic boast and foolish word, he never risked much of his political capital to chastise those who did traffic in that currency.

There is, all the same, a clear line traceable from the Degania battles of 1948 to the last, bleak option which is all that Dayan can see for the future of his people. Israel, by this account, is in the position of the outnumbered guerrilla who declares that anyone who shoots at him will release a fused bomb and blow up the plane. As a tactical solution for a desperate man with strong nerves, it may occasionally work. As a strategy for the survival of a nation, it needs replacing – quickly.

Derek Mahon

Bunburying

Oscar Wilde by SHERIDAN MORLEY *Weidenfeld* £4.95

Oscar-writers, says Sheridan Morley, have long been divided into two main groups, those who have seen him as a betrayed genius and those who have seen him as a tiresome old queen who got what was coming to him. Sheridan Morley aims to be somewhere between the two:

This book is not a thesis but an attempt at hardback documentary. To understand what happened to Wilde it is important to understand the world in which he lived; by no means the cloistered, poetic hothouse in which early biographers were keen to place him, it was instead the commercial theatre and publishing worlds . . .

And indeed Mr Morley's hard-nosed though by no means unsympathetic approach does give us a clearer picture of the man. Struggling to support his wife and children, negotiating with publishers and theatre managers, shrewdly promoting his own image, he was very much of this world. Too much so, indeed, as Mr Morley's factual account of Wilde's dealings with the homosexual *demi-monde* makes plain. A hagiographical conspiracy by the betrayed-genius school has kept Oscar securely on his pedestal, spouting unanswerable epigrams. This has been achieved in great measure by repre-

senting him as a romantic hellenist devoted to the aristocratic, if petulant, Lord Alfred Douglas, and by turning a blind eye to less Grecian figures like Alfred Taylor and Alfred Wood, to name but two.

Caught up in the airy-fairy and linguistic bravura of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, for example, one tends to forget that its author was striving, as in the Huysmans-inspired inventory of Dorian's excesses, to describe, in a necessarily artificial way, his own private life. For rare spices and fine silks read vaseline and stained sheets. The plays too, as Mr Morley suggests, are not the cool art objects, serenely self-contained, that they first appear. The man who suffered was never far behind the artist who created. The immense success of *An Ideal Husband*, for example, in which a woman of bad character attempts to blackmail a respected public figure, may well have owed something to an incident several months before, when a man called Allen had attempted to blackmail the famous playwright Wilde.

Even *The Importance of Being Earnest* – a 'heartless' play, thought Shaw – deserves a closer look:

A play about a man able to lead a double life, changing his name at will and disappearing for illicit week-ends of Bunburying, had echoes of Wilde's own private life.

(Interestingly, there was once a fourth act, cut by George Alexander, in which John Worthing actually found himself in danger of imprisonment for unpaid debts.) And the language of the plays, although Mr Morley doesn't go into this, is often the language of a man with a highly developed sense of perdition. Too often for comfort there is talk of horror, degradation and hideous precipices, of evil, vice and sin, and of course of scandal. 'Scandal,' says Cecil Graham in *Lady Windermere's Fan*, 'is gossip made tedious by morality.'

'How could such a shrewd self-publicist,' asks Mr Morley, 'have failed to see the trap he was getting himself into before it was too late?' There are, I think, two answers to this. Mr Morley's is that Wilde failed to grasp the nature of Victorian society. Wilde, for all his confident dismissals of middle-class hypocrisy, for all his experience of Clubland and Fleet Street, was never quite on the wavelength of English public opinion. He was always a foreigner. The stirring anti-British speeches of Esther Worsley, the American girl in *A Woman of No Importance*, are of a piece with his francophilia and his mother's Irish nationalism. (She wrote patriotic verse under the pen-name of 'Speranza'.) Wilde himself was conscious of this. When *Salomé* was refused a licence by the Lord Chamberlain he resolved to live in France, and told the London correspondent of a Parisian daily: 'I am not at present an Englishman. I am an Irishman, which is by no means the same thing.'

The second answer is that Wilde *did* see the trap and deliberately chose to be caught in it. A penitential, even a sacrificial strain is evident in his work, and his obsession with the figure of Christ was lifelong: he died a Catholic. Wilde, too, was crucified, or so he felt, at Clapham Junction in November 1895:

From two o'clock till half-past-two I had to

stand on the centre platform, in convict dress and handcuffed, for the world to look at . . . When people saw me they laughed . . . For a year after that was done to me, I wept every day at the same hour and for the same space of time.

He lived to tell the tale. Also to campaign vigorously for prison reform, and for the reinstatement of his old friend Warder Martin of Reading Gaol, dismissed 'for giving biscuits to a child'. Martin remained loyal and discreet. 'Asked years later about Wilde's prison friendships, he replied briskly: "I never did night duty".'

As Mr Morley points out, there have now been more than 100 books on the subject, most published since 1920, which averages out at roughly two a year. Most of these, one suspects, are biographical rather than critical; for Wilde's personality, and the dramatic symmetry of his fate, exert a continuing fascination, while the work itself receives diminishing attention as the years go by. 'I have put my genius into my life,' said Wilde, 'and my talent into my work'; but it would be heartening to see a serious and comprehensive critical study of that talent in print before the poor man goes down in history as a marginal curiosity like Beau Brummel or Casanova; before it becomes possible to say to him, as he himself said to a journalist who had attacked him in the press and one day cordially accosted him in the street: 'You will pardon me. I remember your name perfectly, but I can't recall your face.'

Tom Baistow

Paper Moon

The Fleet Street Disaster by GRAHAM CLEVERLEY *Constable* £4.50 and £2.50

The Silent Watchdog by DAVID MURPHY *Constable* £5.25 and £2.75

Bad news has always been the best news from the point of view of the press and, of course, its readers (no pious protests, please – even flagging circulations revive, however temporarily, during bouts of national or global gloom: you, the public, are very partial to Doomsday in all its manifestations). But, as Graham Cleverley rightly asserts in his rather hyperbolically titled study of national newspaper mismanagement, bad news about the press itself, its ramshackle structure, feather-bedded work force and suicidal policies, gets few column inches, and those unrevealingly deadpan. So, armed with experience both as a journalist and a manpower executive, he has set out, from the safety of an institute of business administration, to blow the gaff on Fleet Street's failure to make the Fourth Estate pay.

A very readable and informative trip round the insolvent estate it is too, give or take the odd misapprehension. Much of the ground is well-trodden to insiders, and much of his material is inspired by the block-busting Economist Intelligence

Unit report of 1967 whose most telling revelation was that one in every three of the national press's employees was a highly paid passenger, and which, contrary to Cleverley's contention, really set off the erosion of the mad world of 'ghost' workers who never appear, 'regular casuals', 'fat' (money paid to staff men for type set by outside firms) and the hour's overtime paid when the clock is put forward for British summer time. Not least interesting for the layman will be the details he gives of the astonishing earnings that relatively undemanding jobs command, although his figures are already out of date – my latest information is that linotype operators on classified ads can now knock up between £9-12,000 a year, because of an old agreement that increases the rate in inverse ratio to the size of the (once hand-picked) type.

Here it must be said that this is the last idiot fling of the 'craft' epoch as Fleet Street switches with remarkable speed (it has happened since this book was written) and surprisingly little real resistance to an electronic age in which, if it can somehow raise the money, it will be able at last to buy the unions' anachronistic rule-book. However, Graham Cleverley, in his indictment of newspaper management's failure to recognise the importance of profits as distinct from circulation and advertising success, makes two important points. Readers of this paper may recognise that they are perhaps not quite as original as Mr Cleverley's breathless air of an Archimedes in full 'Eureka!' might suggest, but

they need stressing. First, that with rocketing labour and newsprint etc. costs the advertiser is often no longer subsidising the reader – the reader, through the increase in cover prices, is, more and more, subsidising the advertiser. Second, that if papers would stop blindly trying to expand sales to win more and more advertising to beat their rivals and concentrate on a circulation appropriate to their appeal, with a lower volume of higher-priced advertising and a more realistic, i.e. higher, cover price, they could get into the black.

Too Cleverley by half, he uses equations to reach conclusions that a wet forefinger in the wind would produce. 'For simplicity's sake' he sets out the conditions for profitability as:

$$(\emptyset + R + I + N)1.1 > \emptyset + 1.1I + 1.2I(R + N)$$

which simplifies to $\emptyset 1 > 1.1(R + N)$

I am in no position to challenge such convincing evidence, but I would question his grasp of newspaper politics, as important as the double-entry bookkeeping if one is to understand the press's nature as well as its physiognomy. He seems to assume, for example, that Hugh (now Lord) Cudlipp handed over his readable but unprofitable *Sun* to Rupert Murdoch for a peppercorn out of some high-minded sense of something or other: the truth is, IPC wouldn't stand the £8m. loss but didn't dare let the paper (né *Daily Herald*, which the TUC had a stake in) die for fear of union displeasure. Similarly, his rather naïve admiration for Murdoch's 'managerial' success

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with the new *Sun* fails to take account of the fact that – its LCD tit-and-bum appeal apart – the very circumstances of the deal ensured he was on a likely winner from the start: with the threat that there would be no jobs at all unless he got his way, Murdoch was able to screw from the unions reduced manning levels unknown elsewhere, and refuse to take on the costly Manchester publishing centre.

What Fleet Street suffers from, declares Cleverley, is 'a congenital disability [*sic*] to understand what its purpose is, even at the top of the organisation'. Particularly at the top, I would say, for Fleet Street is not, thank heavens, a programmed monolith but odd groups of people in the words business for all kinds of reasons: the *Guardian* to preach the word, although the word may change and even at its best be vague; the *Sun* to make Murdoch's ego flesh; the *Financial Times* to add yet more money to Lord Cowdray's millions. Such quibbles aside, this is a book that journalists would do well to read.

In another book in the same Communication and Society series, David Murphy takes a painstaking but perceptive look at the local press, which is not only much more successful financially than the nationals but enjoys a much higher reputation for accuracy and probity. Murphy is also a former journalist – although one could hardly tell from his thick sociological dialect – and he knows where to look for the pressures, personal, political and economic, that can turn these presumed watch-

dogs of the public weal into passive lap-dogs of private, and often corrupt, interests.

Paul Bailey

Brave Face

Blaming by ELIZABETH TAYLOR Chatto £3.50

Amy Henderson, the central character in Elizabeth's Taylor's last novel, is a woman of average intelligence and limited sensibility. She is 'nice' to the extent that she does her best to conceal the boredom and irritation seething inside her, but otherwise she isn't particularly likeable. She has the good manners of the thoughtless, the tact of the uninvolved, she knows only her own problems. She bears a striking resemblance to a hell of a lot of people.

At the start of *Blaming*, Amy is on a Mediterranean cruise with her husband, Nick – a gifted painter who has recently suffered a heart attack. Amy has submitted to the holiday for the sake of Nick's health, out of a sense of duty. She trudges round museums, churches, ruins and mosques, scarcely containing her lack of interest: while he enthuses over the works of art, she pictures the first drink before dinner. Amy is impatient, too, with the friend they

have made on the voyage – an American novelist called Martha Larkin, who is anxious to understand the English temperament. Then, one night, she can stand it no longer; she breaks down, and her bemused, tolerant husband laughs gently at her distress. They make love. Afterwards, Nick returns to his bed, falls asleep, and dies.

Blaming is largely about Amy's widowhood – how she endures it, and how it changes her. The book covers a year in her life. Her slight progress from total absorption in her own misery to a state of mind bordering on the self-forgetful is charted by Mrs Taylor with all her old artistry – that enviable compound of beady-eyed detachment and sympathetic understanding. Under her steady gaze, Amy is allowed to get away with nothing. Grief makes this privileged woman in her pretty house by the Thames even more exasperated, even more suspicious of other people's motives. She 'puts a brave face on things' (there are dozens of 'brave faces' in Mrs Taylor's fiction) more out of custom than consideration. The strongest emotion she feels is fury – fury with Nick for dying; fury with the solicitous Martha, who escorts her back to England and then has the nerve to intrude on her privacy; fury with her son and his wife and their two daughters. It is the fury of someone who doesn't want help, who doesn't need humouring. It is an aspect of bereavement that few novelists care to investigate.

The book's title is a misnomer – 'Coping' might have been more apt. For Amy Henderson copes, day in, day out, with the long hours stretching ahead of her. She copes by trying to suppress the disruptive feelings which threaten to shatter the calm order of her life. She copes, with superficial good grace, with the few demands her family make on her. Even her failure to cope when Martha Larkin asks for help in return teaches Amy something about herself, though the knowledge will hardly change her. But this short, reverberating novel is too subtle a work to be pinned down in such a way; blaming and coping are dealt with in its pages, but not to the exclusion of other, equally interesting, facets of human behaviour.

It is with Martha Larkin, though, that Mrs Taylor's irony comes into full play. Martha is a kinder person than Amy, and in some respects a more thoughtful one. She is the type of girl who will sleep with a man because she pities him. She is also very much the type of girl whom most people, and not just Amy, would run a mile from in life. Her novels, Mrs Taylor suggests, are of the 'sensitive' kind:

It was very short, but all the same she skipped through it – and thought what a stifling little world it was, of a love affair gone wrong, of sleeping-pills and contraceptives; a woman on her own. Objects took the place of characters – the cracked plate, a dripping tap, a bunch of water-sprinkled violets minutely described, a tin of sardines, a broken comb and the lone woman moved among them as if in a dream.

While Martha is around, *Blaming* is at its most brilliant; her suffocating kindness displayed as the least desirable of virtues. Her eventual suicide, after a ghastly marriage to a man she pities, is insufficiently

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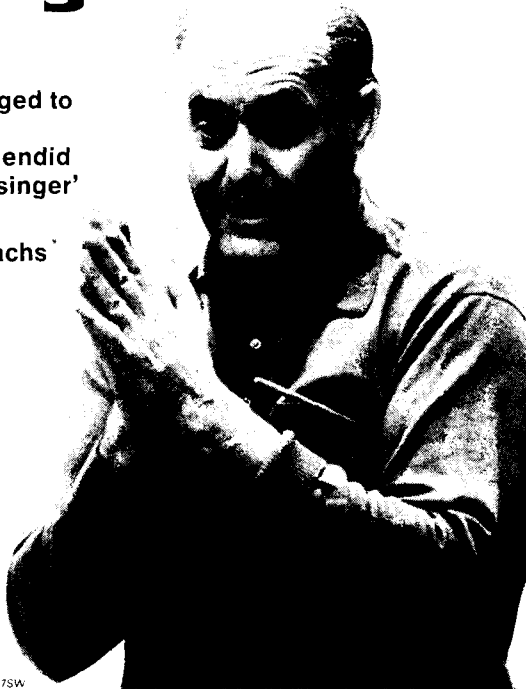
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accounted for in the narrative. Had she lived a little longer, I feel sure that Mrs Taylor would have filled out this part of the story and given it more weight.

The most fascinating characterisation in *Blaming* is of Ernie Pounce, the cook-cum-butler-cum-dogsbody who runs Amy's house for her. He is genteel, and rather tatty, and ever so slightly camp. He has a 'past' (which Martha, typically, gets him to talk about) and absolutely no future beyond the job he does so annoyingly well. Mrs Taylor merely hints at his loneliness, but a hint is enough. His relationship with Amy is beautifully done: Madam's indifference to him, her habit of looking at him as if he were transparent, is something he has long been accustomed to. Once a week Ernie takes a day off: 'I go up to my Jazz club in Town and have myself a ball.' It is there that he befriends a lady wrestler ('No nails!'): 'She turned up with a gentleman friend, this time. Afterwards, we all went Dutch at the Chinese. Well, that sounds Irish, if you like.'

Blaming contains a large number of grim truths and sad insights, but it isn't a depressing novel: its sensitivity is a world away from Martha's. It is often hilariously funny, especially when Amy's repulsive granddaughter, Isobel, is doing her worst. Elizabeth Taylor always aimed for balance in her novels and stories, and in her finest work she quietly achieved it. She was a tough writer – a fierce moralist who never indulged in moralising; a stylist who made her elegant prose earn its keep. During her distinguished career she was compared to every 'sensitive' writer under the sun, including Chekhov, that favourite standby of reviewers. She wasn't really like any of them. As far as her true admirers are concerned, there is no one quite like her.

Tina Brown

Old Vic

The Right True End by STAN BARSTOW
Michael Joseph £3.95

My Organic Uncle and Other Stories by
DAVID POWNALL Faber £3.95

Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less by
JEFFREY ARCHER Cape £3.50

The Right True End is Stan Barstow's third novel about Vic Brown, the Yorkshire lad of *A Kind of Loving* (1960) who does the decent thing when Ingrid gets into trouble. Sixteen years later we find Vic the kind of sophisticate who refers to himself as 'yours truly', a resident of the soft South as a £6,000-a-year engineer, divorced, sexually emancipated, cultured enough to recognise Brahms's D minor concerto as the theme for *The L-Shaped Room*, but still pining for Summat he'll never find.

The early novel was funny and tender. Barstow's dialogue and description captured the flavour of the Fifties in the North when the purchase of a French letter had to be plotted with the cunning of a commando

raid, and there were two 'bints' at the Palais de Danse, one plain, one smashing, and I don't think much of yours. The narrative tone was that of a man jingling the change in his trouser pocket prior to announcing, 'Right-ho, I'll be off then.' The novel succeeded, as it deserved to, because of the veracity of observation (the smell of ironing in the Old Lady's kitchen) and the realism of the development in Vic's feelings from lust to indifference to a bitter acceptance of entrapment with Ingrid.

Watchers on the Shore, Barstow's second book, took the story on into an affair with an actress called Donna who skived out of Vic's life bearing a media person's child. The new novel finds Vic mooning about, wondering what life has left him except, in Barstow's resonant phrase, 'a passport to loneliness'. But in part two, and ten years later, a chance perusal of the *Guardian* arts page puts him in touch with Donna again, and the child turns out to be his own. Ay up, Vic! We leave the emotional pair sitting down to an optimistic steak.

A Kind of Loving was clearly a memory job. Barstow, like Vic, was the son of a Yorkshire miner who played the cornet and went into a draughtsman's career. With the new novel he has aged 16 years along with Vic: just as the early dust jacket featured him craggy and quizzical in a committed cardigan, now he broods on the back flap in pepper-and-salt profile. The difficulty is that if Vic Brown has moved, Barstow has stayed in Yorkshire. *The Right True End* never feels more than notional autobiography: what might have happened to Barstow had he been lured South. It is a follow-up rather than a sequel, dependent on flash-backs, recaps, flash-forwards and rechauffé characters who will mean little to the new reader of Barstow and do a disservice to the subtleties of *A Kind of Loving*. Vic's boring business trip to Australia, his banal 'man of the world' banter with office colleagues, his predictably meaningless entanglement with a pushy modern wife, suggest that Barstow writes with feeling only of what he knows and has experienced. He launches Vic on a series of forlorn and randy wanderings round London, causing him to loiter in such hackneyed landscapes of disaffection as Piccadilly Circus and Soho strip joints. One feels that Barstow has given himself ten minutes between a BBC broadcast and the last train back to Leeds to bone up on the feeling of dispossession in the Great Metrop. If this is all 'character development', it is poor stuff.

It is kinder and more interesting to see *The Right True End* as literary propaganda, a romantic comparison of the differences between North and South rather than changes in a man's life. It is remarkable how when Vic goes North to see the Old Man in hospital the prose sheds the perfunctory quality of the London passages and we find again the poignant comedy of *A Kind of Loving*.

Life in the North, one is led to believe, is less self-indulgent, still vibrant with cloggy community virtue. It is a pity that Mr Barstow, who writes so well about where he has elected to stay, when the Waterhouses and others have fled South, should have felt the need to catapult his hero up-market. We would have had a better novel, possibly

an excellent one, if Vic Brown had stayed in Cressley.

David Pownall's collection, *My Organic Uncle and Other Stories*, shows him to be a fastidious writer – and he needs to be with some of his material, gathered while working in copper mining in Zambia. In 'The Reluctant Ferryman' the depletion of the low-caste tribe which specialises in driving hearses necessitates the conscripting of a cemetery official to clear up a plethora of corpses jowled up in the freezer. Pownall is deft enough to wring comedy and pathos out of pedestrian as well as exotic material. The best story, 'A Place in the Country', describes a young widow's attempt to avoid regressing to where she was before her marriage: 'her life was developing backwards' to a grimy Liverpoolian home protecting her mother against a chaotic bully of a husband. She escapes to the countryside only to be sucked back in a taut and vivid confrontation, by her own sense of belonging. This is a brilliant little volume.

Jeffrey Archer has got things upside down. Novelists dream of money and power. Mr Archer had both – a Member of Parliament and investment Big Shot who lost his seat and his million overnight in a bogus anti-pollution wheeze. His presumably autobiographical first novel is dedicated, sinisterly enough, to 'Mary and the Fat Men' and carries a list of no fewer than 21 acknowledgments, headed by David Niven Junior, 'who made me do it', and Sir Noel and Lady Hall, who 'made it possible'. He obviously needed all the help he could get.

TLS THE TIMES
LITERARY
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Theatre

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Ivanov Aldwych

Macbeth Other Place, Stratford

I spent the first part of *Ivanov* counting the times someone said *bore*, *bored* or *boring*, but gave up after the tally had sped to 15, not including words like *dull*, *monotonous*, *tiring* or *wearisome*. The play's society mainly consists of people without mental, spiritual or any other kind of resource, content to spend their lives slumped on sofas or drooping over card-tables, exchanging malicious gossip and tips about money-making. They are, on the whole, more disagreeable than the characters of the later plays, and Chekhov writes about them with hardly more charity than, as doctor, he would have found for a flu germ or intestinal virus. His stance is clinically detached, his tone acid and sardonic: all of which, I suppose, justifies David Jones's decision to present the play as a satire, largely populated by grotesques. When he takes you into the Lebedev household – Carol Gillies fat, crumpled and sour as the miserly hostess, Patience Collier at her most venomous as 'an old lady of indefinite profession', Patrick Godfrey rabbiting on about his obsession, bridge, and the evening's visitors schooled into geometric lines and squares – you feel the scene might have been invented by Dickens and drawn by Boz. For some time now Chekhov production has been moving away from its old fascination with nuance and atmosphere, mist and music; but it has never before ventured as far as this.

Too far, perhaps? It certainly seems so when Mr Jones comes to the mouldering landowner Ivanov, a character not as coldly and heartlessly conceived as the bourgeois maggots around him. Chekhov said that Davydov, who first played the part, had 'a muffled, monotonous little gristmill that sits in his throat and does his acting for him'. John Wood, charged with recreating it here, substitutes another variety of mill, the sort that whirls its arms when the weather gets rough. Here's an actor willing and able to modulate a whisper into a roar, a howl into a hollow snigger. At one point he flails his hands in fury, crashes to the floor, moans a bit, then stumbles to his feet, giggling fatuously at his own histrionics. He shows us (variously) boredom, exasperation, rage, bewilderment, vanity, a touch of tenderness, a great deal of wincing remorse, and an even larger quota of mockery and self-mockery. What he misses is the one quality that would humanise this elaborate caricature: pain.

Wood's limitations in the part seem equal and opposite to those of Gielgud who, by all accounts, became monotonously melancholic. And, when two such actors falter, I think we should ask if Ivanov can be

played by an Englishman at all. Certainly Chekhov himself thought not. The character, he declared, was 'purely Russian', beyond the understanding and range of any foreigner. Ivanov is a burnt-out case, a decent and talented man who has succumbed to premature senility, a 35-year-old fossil out of love with wife, work, world and himself; and in this, as in his peculiar blend of excitement and lassitude, glee and gloom, he's supposed to typify the wasted intellectuals of his day. Wood proves equal to the manic hysteria. It is that Russian blackness which eludes him. Stage directions like 'weeps' or 'sobs' provoke as little from him as the word 'despair'; and even his last-page suicide is truculent and strangely self-satisfied, a snook at society rather than the logical end of his menopausal angst. The justification, I suppose, is that Ivanov has abandoned feeling, along with self-respect and everything else. But Chekhov's text provides a clear, if paradoxical answer to that: he feels, and feels horribly, about his lack of feeling.

The supporting parts, being less demanding, are more successfully played. Estelle Kohler is fragile and touching as Ivanov's consumptive wife, Mia Farrow mulishly determined as the young heiress who longs to mother him, Norman Rodway bluff and genial as the friend with the will, but not the imagination, to rescue him from himself. 'Oh, Nikolai Alekseyich, how much fog you've brought into our lives,' he wails, and it is the cri-de-coeur of a would-be mountaineer who spends his days blindly blundering into lamp-posts. But the most striking presence is Kenneth Cranham's Lvov, the doctor who sees that Ivanov is neglecting his dying wife for a rich girl, and concludes he's a hypocritical fortune-hunter, without redeeming trait. Some early critics misread this character as the play's hero and its author's voice: in fact, he's an instance of what Chekhov most hated and resisted as a dramatist, the tendency to categorise and judge, to reduce complex motives to glum capsules. Mr Cranham is as gruesome as anyone could wish, thrusting his mottled face an inch from his victim's nose, and hoarsely smothering him with bad breath and self-righteousness; but he humanises Lvov, too. He means well, but is unself-knowing, myopic, obsessed. He thinks in clichés, yes: he isn't one himself.

Trevor Nunn's new *Macbeth* occurs in a magic circle, within whispering distance of the furthest spectator. You feel, for once, that you're supping rather intimately with horrors, instead of listening to after-dinner speakers at a showy banquet somewhere on the horizon. I could not quite see why some actors had chosen their costumes from a Dostoevsky novel, some from a Hardy farmyard, some from an Elizabethan

museum; but in all other respects this struck me as a notably effective form for what's substantially the same reading of the play Mr Nunn gave us in the main Stratford theatre two years ago. The apparitions, for instance, are still all in Macbeth's mind, the result of swallowing the witches' home-brew LSD and watching their mannikins (which, this time, he steals and carries about, a pretty grisly bouquet). More importantly, Nunn again emphasises the sexual bond between the Macbeths – and its dismemberment as he becomes more pre-occupied with maintaining power, she more isolated and alone.

But we've new principals, and therefore new emphases. Judi Dench's dealings with darkness are mainly marked by fear and fascination: early on, she's a girl trembling and even giggling at her first horror movie; finally, a broken animal, capable only of a long, thin, grating yowl of protest. But the evening's revelation is Ian McKellen: a still, secretive Macbeth, watching himself helplessly as his darker longings overwhelm him. His most spectacularly successful scene is probably the haunted feast, an ambitious combination of laughing bravado, foaming rage and grotesque mimicry of the genial host – a pseudo-playful slap of someone's cheek, a woozy wave at the departing guests. But I'll mainly remember him towards the end, waxen, blinking, more corpse than man, reviving only for the occasional, seemingly random outburst of disgust, anger, or violence. The performance eloquently reminds us that, before all else, *Macbeth* is about self-destruction, suicide of the soul, waste. I doubt if McKellen has given a better.

Radio

Peter Porter

Tsar Dust

Holidays have made me rather late getting in my congratulations to Ian McIntyre or his appointment as Controller of Radio 4 but at least I have no advice to offer him on the running of his channel. My mair wish for Radio 4 lies outside Mr McIntyre's control – it is more money to spend. I Radios 1 and 2 are to go on filling the air with obligatory noises, and competing with Capital and LBC for the sake of pluralism then the third and fourth channels must make up the bulk of the BBC's serious broadcasting, and I can see no way of improving on the present distribution of interest – 3 for music, 4 for words. More money would give Radio 4 more scope. It isn't only TV cast-offs which get a lot of Radio 4's time but, all too frequently, producers avoid the cost of commissioning programmes and look instead to the book trade – a forthcoming volume by some notable figure. For instance, *The Frank Muir Version*, *The Bedside Kenneth Robinson* and *Quest for the Romanovs* were not just adapted from books, but acted as advertisements

for their hardcover originals, all just on the point of publication. The proportion of programmes on Radio 4 which started life elsewhere is frighteningly high.

All three of the programmes mentioned above were good of their sort (Frank Muir's is a continuing series). The first two were vehicles for virtuoso performers. Frank Muir could enliven a reading from the telephone directory, so when he tackles a subject – food, acting, etc. – he needs only the minimum research, a touch of *brevità* in the editing, and a team of rich voices to embody his quotations. He is witty, civilised and unmemorable, but he certainly isn't dull. Kenneth Robinson is more problematic. As he has attacked me for solemnity in the *Listener*, I mustn't seem either sanctimonious or magnanimous in my comments on his four late-night readings from his book, *Not on Your Telly*. His words, intended for the eye, came over very well in radio readings. Yet his humour is not truly verbal: it depends on sly glimpses of malice in an extremely bland flow of talk. Mr Robinson's voice is his greatest gift. I could listen to his well-processed talk forever, but I would continue to be surprised by the number of mildly suggestive remarks he manages to weave into his discourse. To hear him talk of 'a little folly behind the boiler – a nice warm place for it' is to wonder if you were right to welcome his warm philistinism into your house at a late hour.

The brilliant research of Anthony Summers and Tom Mangold into the real fate of the last Tsar and his family has already been praised by some book reviewers (David Leitch will write about it in next week's NS). At least they have time enough to marvel at it while reading. A listener could only be overwhelmed by so much new and bewildering material presented in the short space of an hour. It is extraordinary that the Sokolov version of the assassination of the whole Russian royal family at Ekaterinburg in 1918 should have gone unchallenged for so long. Mangold and Summers don't know what happened to the Romanovs – merely that what has long been supposed to have happened certainly didn't. And how many examples of bad faith were uncovered in the process of their investigation, the most breath-taking being King George V's cancelling of the British Government's offer of sanctuary to the Tsar and his dependants. The evidence became more hair-raising as it went on: documents removed from official records; the Foreign Office threatening to stop the pension of the British Ambassador to Russia if he should ever reveal the part played in the Tsar's fate by King George. We shall have to believe in Establishment conspiracies after all.

Two more programmes derived from famous writers – Goethe and Antonia Fraser. Martin Esslin produced an adaptation of a story of Goethe's called simply *A Fairy Tale* (Radio 3). Auden believed the German Märchen to be the most important literary heritage of European civilisation after the Bible. If this is so, then (to adapt Cocteau on Minou Drouet) every fairy tale is a work of genius except Goethe's. Ponderous symbolism allied to feeble story telling went on for an hour and a half. It was saved by one device – the employment of David Davis in the central role of story-

teller. His brilliant pacing and complete credibility gave warmth and conviction to a wilful and boring piece of contrivance.

Antonia Fraser decided that Ulysses's homecoming could stand one more updating. So, in *Penelope* (Radio 4), she had a lost South American explorer, Ulick Cummaing (sic), walking in on his literary wife's cocktail party and surprising her suitors. The second part of the play, with Penelope deserted by all her suitors and her husband, at least managed a new twist, but the pleasure of the performance came from a bitchy inside view of literary agents at work, and the fine acting of the cast.

Films

John Coleman

Second-Write

The Omen Odeon, Leicester Square
Seven Nights in Japan ABC 1 Shaftesbury
Avenue, ABC's Bayswater and Fulham
Road

Mother, Jugs and Speed Carlton
Let's Do It Again Warner West End 2

Or 'second-rite', come to that, ruminating none too strenuously on Richard Donner's *The Omen*, which is yet another entry in the devil-stakes, is coining it in the States, and – along with most of the week's bill of fare – seems to testify to a certain unadventurousness in the kitchens of filmdom. Diabolic possession; black-on-black; a dollop of *M*A*S*H*: five of today's tried genres get their outings. If I had to pay, the only one I would leave home for just might be the Donner. Gregory Peck, that likeable if flavourless emblem of Yankee sincerity, is millionaire Robert Thorn, a career diplomat wed to excellent Kathie (Lee Remick): as David Seltzer's story opens, he is lending his useful woodenness to an extreme improbability. Kathie's baby has died at birth in Rome; a priest persuades him to substitute an infant boy, whose mother snuffed it delivering the goods, to unsuspecting Kathie; five years on, Robert is Ambassador to the Court of St James, false-son Damien (a smiling tot, Harvey Stephens) has a birthday party during which his young nanny spectacularly hangs herself from an embassy gable, David Warner is on hand as Jennings, a photographer. Little by little, bad things happen. Jennings finds strange dark lines on his developed snaps, marks that are to correspond with the way nanny, a mad Irish cleric (rattling on to Robert from *Revelations*) and Jennings himself, are to die.

A new nanny (Billie Whitelaw, fittingly baleful) imposes herself on an increasingly hysterical Kathie; a black dog snarls, uninvited, in Damien's bedroom; trips to a church, Windsor Safari Park find little Damien suffering and creating turmoil. Praise the Lord (though the logical might note there could be no diabolism and hence no *Exorcists* and after without Him) that we are spared the green vomit and guttural

obscenities this time round: there are a few scenic excursions of merit as Robert and Jennings make clue-tracing trips to Europe, the deaths are shockingly staged without being disgusting (beware, however, a flying head), the music is very effective when it suddenly breaks into edgy, religious chanting. There is a great, leaf-scuttling storm in a park, finely photographed by Gilbert Taylor, and much of the credit for what works must go to how he was encouraged to use his camera: a close-in shot of the devil-child triking madly in circles, an eerie visit to an Etruscan cemetery (where a quartet of mastiffs attacks), giddy motions round stairs and bannisters – Mr Taylor knows his angles. It is damn silly, though, and never more so than when Mr Seltzer's script takes itself seriously. The stuff from *Revelations* is interpreted as being fulfilled by the Jews getting Israel and the establishment of the Common Market, one of the better far-out arguments against the latter so far presented.

Lewis Gilbert's *Seven Nights in Japan* attempts to take us by the scruff of the throat, back to those ever-to-be-forgotten days when a Ruritanian aristo got the hots for a pleb girl and they knew a short-lived, illicit bliss. Michael York, hands clasped behind his back when they are not clasped behind the delightful one of Hidemi Aoki, is Prince George on a week's official visit to Japan. A minute quantity of fun may be had by some as Mum's voice is faintly heard over the phone to the accompaniment of yapping canines and there is a second delicious girl. Ann Lonnberg, alas fleetingly present, as a thoroughly U swinger who confirms my belief that the county mode of greeting is a perfect palindrome, viz. 'Helleh!' Miss Aoki is a tourist bus-guide who enlivens excursions thus: 'And now I sing yo rittle song', which she does. Very rittle, but not tiny enough to prevent a form of it cropping up at the end when her bus and the Prince's limousine are held up, going in opposite directions, by traffic and a last, crashing whim of the writer, Christopher Wood. There is a sub-plot about terrorists out to kill George (they missed him but killed the press audience) and it is with incredulity one records that Charles Gray, James Villiers, Yolande Donlan and Peter Jones pass through like swallowed beads through a baby.

Peter Yates, our export director is responsible for *Mother, Jugs and Speed*, a simply-add-water bad-taste affair – *S*M*A*S*H*, I suppose – concerning rival fly-by-night ambulance outfits in Los Angeles. Bill Cosby, who used to be a stand-up black comic of some bite, as one recalls, is still black and interestingly articulates with the exquisite wariness of a semi-drunk: he makes, as senior driver of the principal pick-'em-ups, a praiseworthy amount from wretched material. 'Show business', he calls the game as he and his fellows (who include that notable non-chap, Raquel Welch as 'Jugs', a hilarious nickname derived from her forthcoming attractions) pick up dead junkies, prevent one of their number from copulating with a female corpse, get turned away from a hospital with a mother about to give birth: she dies, though they save the baby. Nothing can save a film which lurches towards gallows humour but is

strictly bad noose. The Cosby character, by the by, is called Tucker, which accounts for his sobriquet of 'Mother': 'Speed' is the catsy lad, gunned down in overdue course, who comically fiddles with the stiff.

Our Mr Cosby again in *Let's Do It Again*, directed and played in with a relaxation bordering on inertia by Sidney Poitier; this pair was last seen in *Uptown Saturday Night*, another wan effort mainly staffed by black actors and conducted by Mr Poitier. Here the farcical plot turns on S.P.'s ability to hypnotise folk and B.C.'s urge to capitalise on it. They mix with gangsters over a fixed boxing-bout. There are sidelights on making money for a black religious lodge, the Sons and Daughters of Shaka, which may mean more – satirically – than is readily available to whitey audiences. A 'U'-certificate? Delighted, but as long as the nonsense of censorship persists isn't that being unduly permissive about some pretty rough language? Or was that one of the other films?

The Proms

David Nichols

Desert Island . . .

Perhaps it's by way of compensation for the indignities Britain has suffered at the hands of steroid-packed East German athletes and West Indian bowlers, but this year's Prom season has been as British as the tatty banners that keep the spirit of Empire alive on the last night. If we read the signals aright, then Britannia rules the staves, and the sun will never set on Sir Henry Wood. It's been a choice year for the home product.

It isn't simply that this year's season has been performed solely by British orchestras. That is probably just another side effect of the falling purchasing power of the pound, and I suppose we will learn to live with it. It's no great loss to be spared another six-cylinder transatlantic orchestra streaking through *Also Sprach Zarathustra*. One gets the feeling that while much of the English music in this year's season has been interesting enough (though a lot of it rather predictable) there's a genuine insularity in the content of the Proms as well as in their personnel. It is not a major shift, but something seems to have happened to the Proms' sense of direction.

A brief glance through the prospectus throws up a few interesting sums. There are 80 works by 20th-century composers. Of these, 36 are British. Of 36 works by living composers, 25 are British or Australian. And there are only 11 works by living foreign composers – four of these lumped together as a token gesture to the Bicentennial. That leaves three living composers from the non-English speaking world – Berio, Ligeti and Messaien (only one premiere, by the way) – as well as Dallapiccola, who may still have been alive when the season was planned. Notably absent are

Henze, Stockhausen, Boulez, Xenakis, Cage, Nono, Penderecki, Feldman and Take-mitsu. A bad year for Europe. Not a very good one for the Second Viennese School classics either, with one Webern work (his Opus One), two well known bits of Berg and not a squeak of Schoenberg.

This matters, because the Proms have come to be our most influential musical event, not just one of the world's great summer festivals but a crucial educative force. After all, compared with any year of Festival Hall concerts, a season that lasts two months and includes the *Play of Daniel, Pelléas* and the Salzburg Festival Mass, as well as 80 works from this century, is a masterpiece of imaginative catholic planning. But because the Proms have set our standards, those standards should now be used to judge the Proms themselves.

It was the pioneering energy of the BBC in the early Sixties, first with the creation of the Music Programme, then with the appointment of Boulez to the BBC Symphony Orchestra, that moulded the current Prom audience. It's an unusual audience, not just because it is young and sits on the floor and makes a lot of noise, but because it has a grasp of this century's whole musical tradition. That means sensing the connection between the language of the impressionists and Stockhausen, Mahler and the Darmstadt school. The BBC Symphony Orchestra concerts in general, and the Proms in particular, have achieved this, not through programme notes, but through really imaginative programme building.

If, as I did, you gained your musical education in the Fifties and early Sixties, then your mainstay must have been the Proms. I did a spot check on what else was around as a general introduction to musical thought, by looking up an old birthday present from 1957, a much-reprinted work called the *New Musical Companion*. There it was, the entire musical history of the Western world in 751 pages, and of course it's easy now to giggle at the eccentricities of taste and the silly omissions. But it struck a chord in my memory, for music lessons at school served up much the same mixture. The *NMC* has 13 lines about Webern, but blesses Arnold Bax with over 100. While Edmund Rubbra has five pages devoted to his symphonies, Stockhausen has to make do with a couple of lines. Equipped as we were with insular blinkers like these, the Proms afforded just the sort of powerful field glasses that an eager generation of schoolchildren needed.

It's doubtful how long the Proms can continue as one of the world's great international festivals. And, as penury forces the big four orchestras into even more conservative programme planning, the Proms are all we have left. Contemporary British music is important, of course. So are groups like the London Sinfonietta and the Fires of London, the Matrix and the Nash Ensemble. But so is the context of European music that these bands have provided in the past. The Proms should be a festival in Britain, not a Festival of Britain, and if we start putting up the shutters, then they will revert to the old insular jamboree that they used to be when I was puzzling over the *New Musical Companion* and Arnold Bax ruled OK.

Television

Ian Hamilton

Pork Pies

'A vital form of journalism or a give-away throw-away?' *The Editors* (BBC-1) last Sunday was supposed to be celebrating the new *Sunday Telegraph* colour magazine by mounting a thoughtful discussion of the genre. Unluckily, two things went wrong: the *Telegraph* magazine failed to appear (courtesy of 'a small group of greedy and rather unprincipled people', its editor confided) and the assembled thinkers, as if stunned by this misfortune, were disinclined to offer more than a few over-hecktic boasts about the usefulness of their respective organs. Pitted against the three colour-mag supremos was the wan, resentful figure of Tom Hopkinson, who used to edit *Picture Post*.

Picture Post, as we all know (and, in my case, have never bothered to check up) was a venture of humbling excellence; done to death by the telly, its grainy relevance is invariably invoked when people wish to denounce the flashy, ad-prone ways of current photo-magazines. No one in this discussion was bold enough to question Hopkinson's right to look down on them, but all three – and in particular the boyish Hunter Davies – were able to expose his muddle-headedness. On the one hand, he accused the colour mags of having only 'a slight connection with photo-journalism', by which he seemed to mean that their pictures were no good. On the other, he claimed to yearn for more 'considered, in-depth consideration of issues of the day'. The editors, needless to say, believed that they did both and began rattling off lists of the amazing, incredible and fantastic pix and stories they'd put out (the *Observer* man, asserting his journal's preoccupation with 'real stories about real people' cited *Alive* as one of his key scoops: 'a story of ordinary people eating each other'). Hopkinson looked weary, as if these boys would never learn.

In the middle of all this, George Scott kept trying to raise the points we'd quite like to have heard answered: about the connection between text and advertising, about whether or not the *Picture Post* style of 'hard realism' is only possible in black and white, about the whole image of themselves that these papers have cultivated, or at any rate, assented to. However worthy and well-written the article, 'can you take it seriously in the context in which it's placed?' Good question: too good, in context, to get answered.

Unanswered questions were thick on the ground also in BBC-2's marathon talk-in on the advertising industry, *Legal? Decent? Honest? Truthful?* But then if you ask questions like this, you deserve all the evasions you get. Similarly, if you pit an economics don who thinks advertising is a waste of money against an agency mogul who's made a pile out of it, you can't expect much collaboration in pursuit of truth. What you can

expect is what we got; the flamboyant mogul employing flair, impact, presence and that sort of thing to distract us from the stirrings of thoughtfulness induced in us by cowed don's tentative statistics. Two different worlds, with an abyss in between; an abyss into which the programme's bravely basic questions inevitably plopped.

The disclaimer that parenthesised the recent Auberon Waugh Lectures has now been adopted by *Pilger* (Thames) – at his request, it's said, so that he can be as Left as Waugh was Right. Last week, *Pilger* was expressing 'a personal view' of the plight of a Red Indian tribe which has had its water siphoned off to provide the white man with boating facilities. Fish are dying, and the red man's ancient customs are dying with them; pale with indignation, *Pilger* paced the abused area trying to find redskins who felt as badly about the whole thing as he did. Some clearly did, but they weren't prepared to foam at the mouth on white man's cue; instead, they were muted and resigned, glad even that they still got some kind of special treatment from their occupiers ('not like the black man'). It was thus left to their new friend to jack up the rhetoric, to talk of 'what we all achieve when we knowingly and culpably destroy the relation between man and nature'. Not you too? we wanted to retort, faced with such glib compassion.

'You've been telling me pork pies, haven't you?' *The Sweeney* (Thames) may well tell us a few about the Flying Squad's muscular procedures; certainly it needs more than the odd triumphant slice of cockney slang to persuade us that everything else in this supremely slick series is spot-on. Still, I wouldn't want to suggest this to anybody-in-its face; the punch-ups, between which there is always a serviceable plot, are still the most grisly and heartfelt on British television. In this week's episode, Regan was more than usually itchy in the boot as he pursued the gunman who had crippled an old colleague, ribs crunched and heads split as he made his routine inquiries, and even his troubled superior seemed not to mind too much this time.

Weekend Competition

No 2430 Set by T. A. Dyer

The finals of the Brain of Britain were recently held: competitors are invited to describe a contest to find some other part of the national anatomy. Limit: 120 words, by 19 August.

Result of No 2427 Set by Jim Anthony

NORWICH, at the foot of a love letter, signifies Nickers Off Ready When I Come Home. Competitors were asked to devise more acronyms for itinerant randies.

Report by Little Keith

They were asked, in addition, *not* to be too filthy, an injunction which few heeded. As G. J. Arnold was thoughtful enough to point out, hundreds of contestants, normally 'too lazy and talentless to bother', can never

resist a smutty comp. So it was, I'm afraid, a case of Ma's out, Pa's out, let's play dirt: pee po belly bottom drawers. Lots of the heroically tackled Llanfairpwllgwg . . . the dump in Wales that ends –gogoch, including Dr J. M. Haynes, whose stylish rebuke I print below, along with J. A. Riddle's and John Parry's more salacious versions (£4 each). The other winners (£1 per acronym), as you will see, triumphed through their use of some kind of indirection; whereas the losers (an ejaculatory blizzard of about 250 entries), all vaseline and stocking-tops, failed to ingratiate themselves with a touchy and overworked Little Keith.

Linking Letters And Names Fosters Acrostic Indelicacy. Regular Prize Winners Like Literary Goals, Whereas Yahoos Now Grab Your Lousy Loot, Gorged On Geographically-Expressed Rudery. Your Competition Humours Warped Readers' Nastier Drolleries. Remember, Obscenity Begets Wantonness, Lechery, Lewdness, Lasciviousness, Lubricity And Naughty Things (Including Sex – I Loathe It). Obscene Gags Or Giggles Often Give Older Competitors Hiccups.

J. M. HAYNES

Listen Lovely Accountancy's No Fun Actually I Really Prefer Women Long Legs Great Wet Yearning Nipples Gorgeous Yawning Luscious Lips Getting Old George Excited . . . Right You Corker Here's What You Really Need Don't Rush Ouch Bloody Wait Listen Later La . . . Lower Aaaaah Now Then Yes Steady I Listen I Oh God Oh God Ooh God! Oooh CHRIST!! Hankie?

J. ARTHUR RIDDLE

Linda Lovelace Approach Number Five And Inverted Rabbit Position With Long Leaps – Garments: Wear Your New Gossamer Yashmak, Leather Leggings, Gold Ornamental G-string.

Eating: Raspberry Yoghurt, Curry Heaped With Yams, Ripe Nectarines.

Drink: Rhinoceros Ointment Blended With Liquified Lettuce, Lingam Liqueur And Nubian Tiger Yeast.

Scent: Intimate Licence If Overtired Get Out Game Of Canasta, Henry.

JOHN PARRY

Colonels Here Expect Lovemaking Twice Every Night. Hurry Aunt Mabel!

Bedsprings Always Twang Harmoniously. Got Lustful Young Nymphet Decidedly Behind Orchestra – Unusual Repertoire Neatly Executed.

Bedridden Until Xmas; Tired Of Nooky.

JOHN MUIRHEAD

Vital Inflate Rubber Girl Immediately No Intercourse Available Without Astronomical Tariff En Route.

PADDY BEESLEY,

Penelope, Anticipate Dialectical Discussion Incubating Neoplatonic Gregorians. Tool On Nod.

GERRY HAMILL

Will Assert Rights, Madge, If 'No Sex Tonight' Expostulation Repeated.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

Say When Available – No Spouse Etcetera About.

L. G. UDALL

Erection Definitely Imminent Now. Book Usual Room Grand Hotel.

BRENDON GORSE

When I'm Near, Darling, Strip Off Regalia.

MICHAEL WEST



Assiac

Chess Board

No 1399

Rest of Awards

Barely a week for solvers to cope with this substantial chore earning them an optimum of 10 ladder-points for each study. Entries must reach the office by Thursday, 23rd, as the solutions are published next day. Those who will earn a share of the quadruple prizes-fund for the winning solvers of the award-pieces will be notified and receive their vouchers. As for the awards there will be the usual four or five months for the cook-hunters to do their damndest. Some space will be found in February or March to announce whatever amendments there might be in the prizes then remitted. This will also be the time to announce one of my personal prizes, the one for the best cook. After the last but one Tourney, four years ago, I couldn't dispose of my fiver because there just wasn't any cook. A unique occasion and quite a feather in the Jury's cap. As for my other personal prize, the one for 'the best newcomer' – a relative term because no one honoured in such exalted company can be quite a 'newcomer' – the Jury has decided to award it to S. T. Saharabudhe of India who won the sixth prize for an uncommonly brilliant and original design. Now here's the final part of the

JURY'S REPORT

Third Hon Mention No 63. A miniature in which White's King makes a long journey to get stalemated.

Fourth Hon Mention No 64. The White King, outside the quadrant of the c-pawn, tours the board to get sufficient counterplay.

Fifth Hon Mention No 17. Precise play leads to a positional draw after a sacrifice by White, all the pieces playing their parts.

COMMENDATIONS

No 20. A short solution, but the stalemate is neat.

No 25. White's quiet eighth move leaves Black a Queen ahead, but unable to win. Unfortunately the White King is already set in position for the stalemate.

No 47. The double-pin stalemate has been shown before. A study showing this idea with movement by the White King has yet to be composed.

No 95. The Board is somewhat crowded, but the double Queen sacrifice is shown, we believe, for the first time.

Third Hon Mention. No 63. I. Vandecasteele, Belgium. Draw: /b6b/8/5k1K/16/4p3/7R/.

Fourth Hon Mention. No 64. I. Vandecasteele, Belgium. Draw: /1K6/2p5/k5P1/5p2/P3P3/6P1/5rP1/6b1/.

Fifth Hon Mention. No 17. J. Fritz, Czechoslovakia. Draw: /8/1R6/8/7k/6Kt1/7r/3K1Pb1/b7/.

COMMENDATIONS

No 20. T. Balemans, Holland. Draw: /7Kt/6bP/5kt2/7P/16/p1k5/K7/.

No 25. S. A. de Silva, Brazil. Draw: /7K/1p3Pr1/4b3/R7/4k3/8/6q1/3R4/.

No 47. N. F. Zababurin, USSR. Draw: /4b3/1Kt2p1Kt1/8/3p2kP/7p/4p1pP/7B/7K/.

No 95. V. S. Kovalenko, USSR. Win: /8/3p4/P6P/1pPp1p2/1p3P2/1P1p3p/pkPK3P/8/.

Report on No 1396

Set 27 August

A: 1) . . . Qa5†; 2) Ka5; Ktc4†; 3) Kb5, Kta3†. B: Kings on c4, c6, d6, d7, e3, f3, f5, f7, g4, g6, all mated by Kte5†.

C: Key Kte6 and if . . . Kf1; 2) Ktf4, etc or . . . Kf3; 2) Qg1, etc.

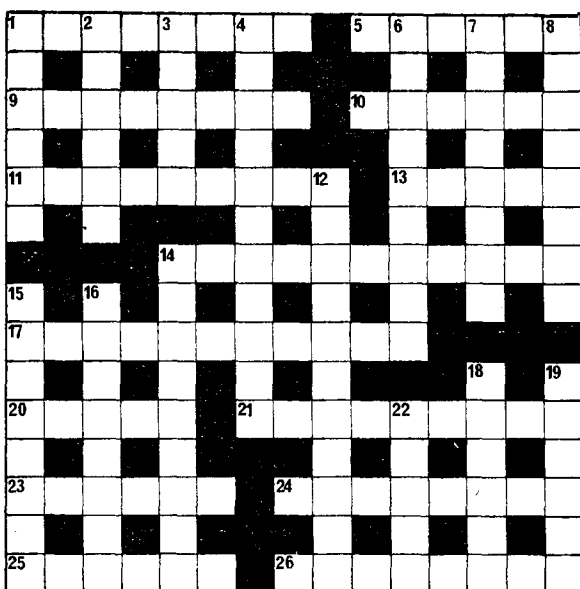
D: 1) Cb7, e5; 2) Qf3†, Ke6; 3) Qb3†, d5†. E: 1) Ktc6, d3 (or . . . Bc5 countered by 2) Kg1, etc); 2) Kta7; 1, d2; 3) Ktb5, d1=Q; 4) Ktc3, Qd6†; 5) Kh1, any; 6) Kte4 making sure of the draw.

F: 1) Bg4†! (Not, of course, Rh4:†? because of . . . Bh4:† e2) . . . ba=Q; 2) Ra5†, c5! (maintaining the double threat) 3) Rc5†, Kh4; (the threat now being . . . Bb6; 4) Bb2; Bb6; 5) Bf6†, Kh3; 6) Bd4, Rd4; 7) Re5†, Rd5†; 8) Kf1, Re5; stalemate.

Many bouquets for F. Prizes: G. Abrahams, E. Allan, S. N. Collings, P. Hodgson, G. W. Richardson.

Weekend Crossword 1182

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1182, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 28 Sept.



ACROSS

1. 'The most — men are the most credulous' (Swift) (8).
5. Old dealer who varies his prices (6).
9. Keep page and book (8).
10. God put me in a woman's (6).
11. Everyone back in the woods fails (9).
13. Ancient Greek who is not quite as tall (5).
14. Plotting for a supersonic power (11).
17. Deciding to put a stop to an underground practice (11).
20. Something hot brings a man back to me (5).
21. Unusually fluid line cancelled (9).
23. Study the route for a place in Wales (6).
24. Value too highly the frequency of delivery (8).
25. Waters lots of flowers (6).

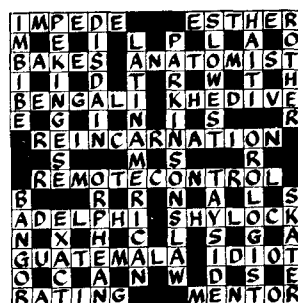
DOWN

26. Features of language revised in Lesson Two (8).
1. Father in a hurry for high religious office (6).
2. Southern city grows (6).
3. Letter of thanks after an article (5).
4. Visit novice taking part in a research activity (11).
6. Newspaper company they impress (9).
7. 'The moping owl does to the moon —' (Gray) (8).
8. Ringing for one biblical character among others (8).
12. Means whereby alcohol might help the bricklayer (11).
14. He gets paid and is happy about cane being broken (9).
15. Buildings in which I fed wrongly on sweets (8).
16. Coarse filter which is used in the lightest rain erroneously (8).

18. Barber holds soldier up in a game (6).
19. Creatures which increase but do not multiply (6).
22. Welsh name for a girl without a penny (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1180



Prizewinners to No 1180

K. Edinborough (Colchester)
Mr G. Healey (Burnley)
Pauline Quennell (Staines)

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Additional information and application forms may be obtained from the British Council, Scholarships Department, 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1 2BN

Closing date for receipt of applications is
31 December 1976

NEW STATESMAN

Vol. 92 No. 2374

Contents

- 358 James Fenton: Spotlight on Politics
- 359 Donald Woods: Change or Pretence in Pretoria?
- 360 Alexander Cockburn: Cold War in New York
- 361 Peter Wilby: School for Squalor
- 362 Mervyn Jones: The Two Maos
- 364 John Morgan: ITV Comes of Age
- 366 Willy Brandt, Bruno Kreisky, Olof Palme: A European Correspondence
- 369 Crucifer: London Diary
- 370 J. J. Fookes: Council Tenant
- 370 Arthur Marshall: First Person
- 371 Letters to the Editor

Books and Arts

- 376 Edward Mendelson: Auden
- 377 Bruce Page: Moshe Dayan
- Other reviews by Derek Mahon, Tom Baistow, Paul Bailey, Tina Brown
- 382 Benedict Nightingale: Theatre
- 382 Peter Porter: Radio
- 383 John Coleman: Films
- 384 David Nichols: The Proms
- 384 Ian Hamilton: Television
- 385 Weekend Competition and Chess
- 386 Crossword

Theatres

CHICHESTER. 0243 86333. 17, 21, 22, 23, 25 Sept. at 7.0, 18, 25 Sept. at 2.0. 'Monsieur Perrichon's Travels'; 18, 20, 24 Sept. at 7.0, 23 Sept. at 2.0. 'The Circle'.

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Meetings

TALK BY GILLIAN TINDALL 'How Writers Write'. Wednesday 22 September 8 p.m. Henderson Court Club, 102 Fitzjohn's Avenue, NW3 (entrance Prince Arthur Road). Hampstead Humanist Society.

THEODOR HERZL SOCIETY. 57 Eton Ave, NW3. Tues. 21 Sept. 8.15 p.m. 'Pourquoi Israël?' powerful, information-packed film. Refreshments.

YOUNG MAPAM. 'Democracy - the Cure for the National Health Service'. Talk by Eric Messer at 8 p.m. on Sunday 19 Sept. at 37 Broadhurst Gardens, London NW6.

'1976 DELEGATION REPORT BACK from Albania'. Fri. 24 Sept. 7.30 p.m. Conway (Small) Hall, Red Lion Sq., WC1. New Albania Society.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY. 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Sat. 18 Sept. 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. Tues. 21 Sept. 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. Wed. 22 Sept. 6.30 p.m. 'Mahayana Buddhism' & 'Theravada Buddhism' - Two separate Study Classes. All welcome. Send s.a.e. for full prog.

THE INTERLUDE OF DEATH. Sun. 19 Sept. 8 p.m. Talk & Questions. Free. S.a.e. for prog., pamphlets, book list. ULT, 62 Queen's Gdns, London W2 3AL.

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